# The Century Bible

Illustrated

# THE CENTURY BIBLE

*General Editor*—Principal Walter F. Adeney, M.A., D.D.

## OLD TESTAMENT

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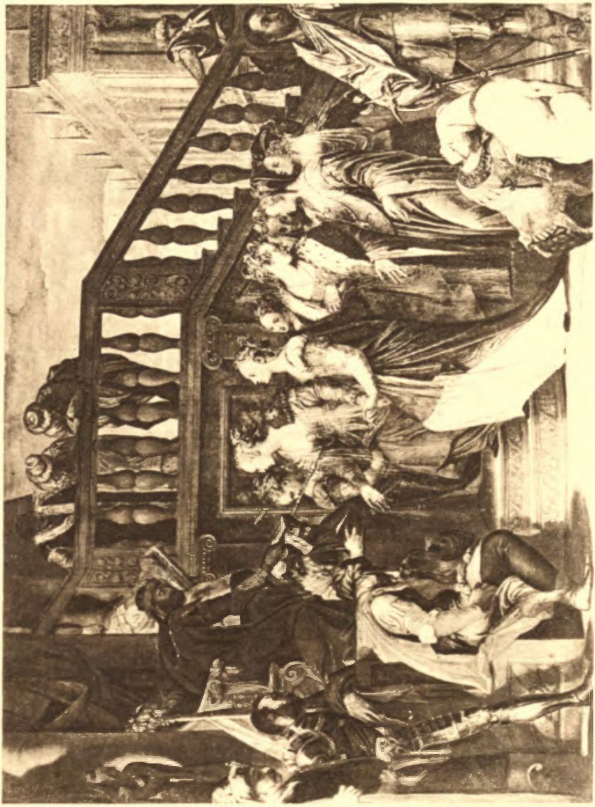

The Century Bible
A MODERN COMMENTARY

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# Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther

INTRODUCTION
REVISED VERSION WITH NOTES
ILLUSTRATIONS

EDITED BY
REV. T. WITTON DAVIES, B.A., PH.D., D.D.
PROFESSOR OF SEMITIC LANGUAGES, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF NORTH WALES, BANGOR; LATE PRINCIPAL MIDLAND BAPTIST COLLEGE, NOTTINGHAM

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# EZRA AND NEHEMIAH

## INTRODUCTION

AND

## REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

# EZRA AND NEHEMIAH

## INTRODUCTION

### I. NAME, PLACE IN CANON.

EZRA AND NEHEMIAH are treated as one book with the name 'Ezra' in the Talmud[1], the Massorah, in the LXX (B) (Esdras (B)), in Josephus[2], and in the early Christian Church. Origen in his Hexapla was the first to divide this one work into two, but the first to give the second part the name 'Nehemiah' was Jerome, according to Sayce[3] and Ryle, though Baudissin[4] says it is due to late MSS. of the LXX.

In the Jewish Canon, as represented by our Hebrew Bible, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles (reckoned as one book) are the two last books in the third division (*Ketubim* or writings, also called *Hagiographa*), and therefore in the Hebrew Old Testament. In the English, Welsh, &c., Bible, Ezra and Nehemiah, counted as two books, appear after Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, and before Esther. It is impossible to say for certain when Ezra-Nehemiah was received into the Canon of the Old Testament. Ryle[5] thinks that every book now in the *Ketubim* must have found its way into the Jewish Canon between 160–109 B. C. His evidence for this conclusion is cumulative, but it is by no means decisive. He does not advance a single argument that settles the matter beyond controversy, nor can the sum total of his arguments be said to do this. It cannot be proved definitely that our Hebrew Bible was recognized as canonical by the Synod of Jamnia (A. D. 90). By about A. D. 200 the whole of the Hebrew Bible as we know it must have been recognized as canonical, for the Mishnah implies that, and we seem justified in believing that in A. D. 200 the Mishnah existed complete, though no documentary witness certifies to the existence of a written Mishnah until some centuries later.

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[1] *Baba Bathra*, 15A.

[2] *Contra Ap.* i. 8, &c.

[3] *Ezra and Nehemiah*, p. 28.

[4] *Einleitung*, p. 264.

[5] *The Canon of the Old Testament* (2), 129 ff.

Though it is the prevailing opinion among modern scholars, especially since the time of Zunz[1], that originally Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah formed but one continuous book, compiled, and in part composed, by one man, named the Chronicler, or by more than one belonging to the same school, there is not an atom of evidence in ancient Codices, Versions, or Editions, that these three books were counted as one, though there is ample evidence that Ezra-Nehemiah was reckoned as one. See further under 'Sources,' &c., pp. 12 ff. The duplication of Ezra i. 1–3$^a$ at the close of 2 Chronicles is due to a late editor who wished to explain when and how the seventy years of the preceding verse came to an end.

## II. THE CONTENTS OF EZRA-NEHEMIAH.

The following analysis rests on the general assumption that the present order of the chapters and verses in Ezra-Nehemiah is in the main at once genuine and authentic, though in some of its details the text has suffered at the hands of copyists and editors.

### EZRA.

The book of Ezra falls naturally into two main divisions. Chaps. i–vi speak of the period from the arrival at Jerusalem of Zerubbabel and Joshua and their fellow exiles to the completion and dedication of the Temple, i. e. from 537 to 516. In chaps. vii–x we have a record of the arrival from Babylon of Ezra and his caravan, and of the work which Ezra did, all comprehended in something over a single year (458–457 B. C.). Of the sixty or fifty years that elapsed between the events of chaps. vi and vii we know practically nothing, though some records of this interval must at one time have existed, perhaps incorporated in the original draft of Ezra-Nehemiah.

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[1] *Gottes Vorträge* (2), 28 ff.

i–vi. *First part of Ezra: from the return to the dedication of the Temple*, 537–516 B.C.

i. Cyrus, having conquered Babylon, permits the Jewish exiles in that country to return to Jerusalem to rebuild their Temple and reorganize their religious institutions, restoring to them the Temple vessels removed by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.

ii (1 Esdras v. 7–45). A list of those who accepted the royal offer, over 40,000 in all.

iii (1 Esdras v. 47–65). Resumption of the religious life of the nation: building and dedication of the Altar (1–3); observance of Tabernacles and other feasts (4–7); foundation of the Temple laid (8–13), 537–6 B.C.

iv. 1–5, 24 (1 Esdras v. 66–73). The Jews refuse the offer of the Samaritans to co-operate with them in the work of rebuilding the Temple, whereupon the Samaritans steadfastly oppose the work, which therefore remained at a standstill from 536 to 516 (twenty years).

The section iv. 7–23 (1 Esdras ii. 15–25) (ver. 6 is an interpolation, see note on) belongs to the history of the building of the walls, and has its right place between Ezra i and Neh. i, or (Torrey, Kent) after Neh. vi.

v. 1 f (1 Esdras vi. 1 f). The building of the Temple resumed through the preaching of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah (520 B.C.).

v. 3–vi. 12 (1 Esdras vi. 3–34). Unsuccessful opposition of the Persian officials to the building (520–15 B.C.).

v. 3–5. The Persian officials make inquiries of the builders.

v. 6–vi. 12. Correspondence between them and King Darius resulting in a royal decree authorizing the Jews to proceed with the building.

vi. 12–18 (1 Esdras vii. 1–11). Completion and dedication of the Temple (516 B.C.).

vi. 19–22 (1 Esdras vii. 12–15). The keeping of the Passover.

*Second part of Ezra*; vii–x (1 Esdras viii–ix. 36): *Ezra's arrival at Jerusalem and his work.*

To these chapters must be added Neh. vii. $73^b$–x. 39, which describe the activity of Ezra and are silent about Nehemiah, though his name has by mistake found its way into Nehemiah (458–457 (or 456, or 455) B.C.).

Between the time implied at the end of ch. vi and the beginning of ch. vii there is an interval of about sixty years, about which the Old Testament is almost, if not quite, silent. Nor do the recently found Aramaic papyri throw any light on this period, as they belong to a somewhat later date.

vii (1 Esdras viii. 1–27). Journey of Ezra and his party from Babylon to Jerusalem, bringing from Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) a commission authorizing the reorganization of Judaism.

viii. 1–14 (1 Esdras viii. 28–40). List of those who return.

viii. 15–36 (1 Esdras viii. 41–64 (66)). The assembling of the party by the river Ahava; incidents of the journey; the arrival.

ix (1 Esdras viii. 68–90). Ezra's grief on hearing that some Jews were married to foreign wives (1–5); his confession and prayer (6–15).

x (1 Esdras viii. 91–ix. 36). Measures taken to put an end to the mixed marriages.

See also the analysis of Neh. viii. $73^b$–x in its place under Nehemiah, though this section belongs strictly to the life of Ezra and, therefore, to the book so called.

The history of Ezra breaks off suddenly and of his end we have no certain information: see p. 155 ff.

## NEHEMIAH.

In this book we have a narrative of Nehemiah's life from the time he received the king's permission to visit his people at Jerusalem (i) to his second visit (xiii).

In i–vii. 5, with which must probably go vii. 6–$73^a$, we have what have been called Nehemiah's memoirs, called by the Germans the 'I' sections, as Nehemiah in them speaks in the first person.

vii. $73^b$–x (see on) forms part of the history of Ezra, and probably stood originally at the end of the Book of Ezra, forming part of that book.

i. 1–$11^{ab}$. Nehemiah's grief on hearing of the sad condition of Jerusalem, and his prayer.

i. $11^c$–ii. Nehemiah, receiving the king's permission, visits Jerusalem: his inspection of the walls and his pathetic impressions.

iii. Names of those who repaired the several parts of the walls.

iv. Opposition to the work (1–8), and the means employed by Nehemiah to overcome it (9–23).

v. Social distress through the hard treatment of the poor by the rich (1–5) and how Nehemiah remedied it (6–13). Nehemiah's own generosity (14–19).

vi. The walls completed (ver. 15), notwithstanding opposition from without (1–9) and treachery within (10–19).

vii. 1–$73^a$ + xi. 1 f. and probably, in addition, the rest of ch. xi. Measures taken for the defence of Jerusalem (vii. 1–3) and for the increase of its population (vii. 4–xi. 1 ff.).

vii. $73^b$–x (less certainly x) belongs to the history of Ezra, and has its proper place immediately after Ezra x as a part of that book: see p. 155 ff. and introductory remarks to vii. $73^b$. Ezra reads and expounds the law (vii. $73^b$–viii. 8); commands the people to rejoice (viii. 9–11); Tabernacles observed (viii. 12–18); confession and prayer (ix. 1–37); signatures to the covenant made (ix. 38–x. 29); obligations assumed by the people (x. 10–39).

xi. 1 ff. Continuation of the history of Nehemiah.

xi. 1 f. How the population of Jerusalem is increased.

xi. 3–xii. 26. Various lists of laymen and Temple officials.

xii. 27–43. Dedication of the walls. Here the first person, dropped after vii. 5, is resumed (see verses 31, 38, 40).

xii. 44–xiii. 31 (end). Nehemiah's second visit to Jerusalem (xiii. 6): his later religious reforms: provision is made for the support of the Levites (xii. 44-47 + xiii. 10-14) and for the strict observance of the Sabbath (xiii. 15-22); energetic protest against mixed marriages (viii. 23-29); Nehemiah's closing words (viii. 30 f.).

## III. THE BOOK OF THE TORAH, OR THE INSTRUCTION BOOK BROUGHT, READ, AND EXPOUNDED BY EZRA.

Before proceeding to a consideration of the sources on which Ezra-Nehemiah rests it will be of some service to consider briefly the nature and extent of the Law Book brought by Ezra (see Ezra vii. 14).

No one now believes that the whole of our present Hebrew Old Testament was brought together and recognized as canonical by Ezra and Nehemiah, helped by the (fictitious) Great Synagogue (see on Neh. viii. 2), and perhaps by Malachi, though it was the prevailing opinion among Jew and Christian in ancient times, and in recent times was vigorously defended by Keil and Hengstenberg in Germany, and by Archibald Alexander and W. H. Green, both of Princeton, U.S.A. It is now agreed among all scholars that many parts of the Old Testament were not even written for some centuries after the above period.

It used to be largely held that Ezra, or one of his predecessors, was the editor of the Hexateuch (Pentateuch and Joshua), and that it was a copy of this which Ezra read. But Ezra shows little or no interest in the earlier, the so-called prophetic parts of the Hexateuch, or any acquaintance with them. It is to the legal portions that Ezra and Nehemiah hark back, especially to the laws in Deut. (**D**) and Lev. xvii. 17-26 (**H**). The use of the word *torah*, translated 'law,' proves nothing in the present discussion, for though in Rabbinical Hebrew it is the technical term for the Pentateuch, it never has that sense in the Old Testament, as Delitzsch in the last edition of his *Commentary on Genesis* (1887) admitted, after having previously maintained the contrary. The word denotes strictly 'instruction,'[1] and is generally used of what God commands through prophets and priests.

Since the enactments of the **P** code are comparatively seldom cited or implied it is strange that Wellhausen[2], Cornill[3], and others should hold that Ezra's *torah* was the **P** code, though the latter passed through later changes and received later additions. It is exceedingly unlikely that the **P** code could have been designated the 'law of Moses' (Ezra vii. 6, Neh. viii. 1), 'the law of Yahweh' (Ezra vii. 10), 'the law of God' (Ezra vii. 14, Neh. viii. 8, &c.), or 'all the commandments, ordinances, and statutes of Yahweh' (Neh. x. 29).

Moreover the laws in Ezra-Nehemiah are often different from those of **P**, and belong to an older stratum of the national life. The pre-exilic custom of offering one whole offering in the morning and one cereal offering in the evening is that implied and followed in Neh. x. 34 (33) (see on). The custom enforced in Ezek. xlvi. 13-15 (both offerings in the morning) and in **P** (Num. xxviii. 3-8, both offerings in the morning and also in the evening) are those of a later time. It must be borne in mind that Ezekiel's code (xl-xlviii) was an ideal, a programme to be realized in after times. According to **P** (Exod. xxx. 13; 2 Chron. xxiv. 4 f., &c.) the poll-tax for the upkeep of the Temple is half a shekel. But the law enforced by Ezra or Nehemiah or both makes the tax one-third of a shekel (see Neh. x. 32 f., and the note on).

Ezra ix. 6-15 and Neh. ix, which have many resemblances, are conceived and expressed much in the manner of **D**; there is nothing of the kind in **P**.

---

[1] Professors Sayce, Haupt, and Zimmern (see *KAT.*(3) 606, note 3) connect the Heb. *torah* with the Bab. *tertu* (= 'the message of a god'), which in the time of Hammurabi had assumed the technical sense of 'a divinely revealed law,' as e.g. the Hammurabi Code. The cognate Bab. verb (*êrû*) means 'to send a message.'

[2] *Proleg.* Eng. Ed. 408 ff.; *Geschichte* (6), 177 ff.

[3] Introd. 112 ff.; Germ. Ed. (5) 58 ff.

The law of the Sabbatic year in Neh. x. 31 (see on) agrees with Exod. xxiii. 10 f. (**JE**) rather than with Lev. xxv. 2–7 (**H**).

For other laws absent from **P** yet found in older codes and referred to in Ezra-Nehemiah see on Neh. x. 30, 39, and on many other passages in the present volume.

Many laws and customs mentioned or implied have no counterpart anywhere in the Old Testament: see on Neh. x. 34.

If it was the **P** code that Ezra published and tried to enforce it is strange that so few of its provisions seem to have been realized, though the *argumentum e silentio* is admittedly a precarious one. The observance of the Feast of Tabernacles is mentioned twice in these books (Ezra iii. 4–7, Neh. viii. 13–18), both of them falling within the scope of Ezra's activity (see on, Neh. vii. 73$^{b}$–x). Nehemiah, otherwise so punctilious about keeping the law, seems to have no concern about the feast. The Passover is mentioned once only in these books, viz. in Ezra vi. 19, but neither Pentecost (the Feast of Weeks) nor the Day of Atonement is even mentioned. Stade[1] thinks that Ezra's *torah* was an enlarged edition of the Holiness Code (**H**, Lev. xvii–xxvi), and Kuenen[2] says it must have included this code. But Geissler in his valuable monograph *Die literarischen Beziehungen der Ezra-Memoiren* (1899) has made it abundantly evident that all the Hexateuch sources have been drawn upon in Ezra vii–x, and the present writer has brought together proofs of the same kind relating to the rest of Ezra-Nehemiah, and is prevented by exigencies of space alone from setting them forth here.

Ezra's *torah* corresponds neither to our Pentateuch nor to the Hexateuch, and still less to any one of the recognized Hexateuch sources (**JE**, **D**, **P**). It seems to have been a collection of laws agreeing mainly with the laws in **D** and **H**, and, in a less degree, with those in **P**. This collection was probably made by Ezra himself from the mass of histories and codes brought together in Babylon, which at length crystalized into our Hexateuch.

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[1] *Gesch.* ii. 181. [2] *Ges. Abhandlungen* (Budde), p. 390.

That this code came to be called the '*Torah* (=Instruction Book) of Moses' (Ezra vii. 6) means no more than that it rested upon a nucleus of law which was rightly ascribed to the great Jewish lawgiver himself. As time went on and the name 'Moses' gathered about it more and more halo it would be natural to associate the whole of the Five Books with his name, just as the 'Five Books' of the Psalter came to be connected with the name 'David,' the Moses of song. Indeed, already in the times with which we are dealing, the expression 'the *Torah* of Moses,' 'of God,' or 'of Yahweh,' had come to have a somewhat technical sense—'the Lawbook for the community of Yahweh founded by Moses.'

## IV. THE PRINCIPAL SOURCES OF EZRA-NEHEMIAH.

Here are to be briefly enumerated the principal materials out of which, in the opinion of the present writer, the final editor (R, i.e. Redactor) wove the existing narrative, not omitting the part contributed by the editor himself. It is not necessary in this place to consider the complex code (*torah*) according to which both Ezra and Nehemiah sought to act and to make others act (see § 3). This became a part of the history which Ezra-Nehemiah contains, and is involved in that history. It is quite evident that these books are more or less compilations—that they are not homogeneous compositions. This is made quite clear by many considerations.

1. The interchange of the first and third persons when Ezra or Nehemiah is the theme of the narrative. In some cases the transition from one person to another is very sudden, as in Ezra ix. 15 and x. 1; Neh. vii. 5 f. and 7 ff.; xii. 26 and 27 ff.; xiii. 1-3 and verses 4 ff.

2. The lack of continuity in the narrative. Between Ezra vi. 22 and vii. 1 there is a break in the narrative representing a period of some sixty years. An editor at a later time would not be greatly struck by this gap when

viewing the past as a whole. Moreover, the Book of Ezra itself has no natural ending, even when we have added to it Neh. vii. $73^b$–x; and many small sections are obviously incomplete, as e. g. that closing with Neh. xii. 43. These two books are, to a large extent, a patchwork, and the pieces joined are sometimes but fragments.

3. Each book displays differences of vocabulary, phrasing, and spirit, though this is in an eminent degree true of Ezra with its 'Aramaic' and 'I' sections. Nothing is more striking in this connexion than the Aramaic portions of Ezra. See below.

4. There are apparent discrepancies which could hardly have existed if the whole had come from one hand. Beside the variations in identical genealogies (see Ezra ii, Neh. vii, &c.) compare Ezra iii. 4 ff. and Neh. viii. 13–18, especially ver. 17.

## ANNOTATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PRINCIPAL SOURCES.

Note that the designating letter precedes the description of the source.

**T.** Temple records, embracing all extant documents relating to the Temple and its officials, but more especially from the return in the time of Cyrus. Such records must have been carefully preserved after the restoration of the sanctuary, probably in one of the Temple treasuries (see on Ezra viii. 29, x. 6). Ezra i–vi belongs as a whole to this source, though the whole has been worked over by a Redactor (**R**). Nothing would be more likely to be scrupulously guarded than the official documents, all in Aramaic except i. 2–4, as during the Persian period they constituted a kind of official recognition of the national religion. Ezra iv. 7–23 (see on) belongs to source **C**, to be noticed later.

**$T_A$.** The Aramaic parts of **T**. These are in themselves of sufficient importance to deserve a separate notice. They are the following, all of them in Ezra:

1. Correspondence between Persian officials in Palestine and Darius I concerning the building of the Temple,

the purpose of the first named being to hinder the work, iv. 7–v. 12.

2. Letter of Artaxerxes I to Ezra officially recognizing the Jewish religion and its central sanctuary, vii. 12–26.

We have a similar Aramaic document in iv. 8–22, and though this has to do with *wall*-building and is to be subsumed under **C** (**C**$_A$, see below) it is convenient to consider it in connexion with the above.

Most recent writers regard these Aramaic sections as genuine though somewhat altered from their original form; thus Driver, Cornill (later editions), Strack, Baudissin, and Budde in their Introductions, Ryle, Siegfried, Guthe, and Bertholet in their Commentaries, and also v. Hoonacker, Klostermann.

Aramaic seems in the fifth century B.C. to have been the language of diplomacy between the various courts and governments of Western Asia, just as French was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries A.D. the *lingua franca* of Western Europe. The recently discovered Aramaic papyri give countenance to this, though the proofs are not very decisive. As the Aramaic portions of Ezra embrace rather more than the official documents many (v. Hoonacker, Driver, Baudissin) have held that there existed originally an Aramaic history from which the parts in Ezra are extracted.

Quite recently[1] Sir Henry H. Howorth has put forth and defended the strange view that Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Daniel, and other post-exilic books were written originally in Aramaic, the Jewish doctors at the Jamnia Council (*circa* A.D. 90) having translated it into the Hebrew of the M.T., retaining parts of the original Aramaic in Ezra and Daniel.

Since the publication of E. Meyer's remarkable essay on *The Rise of Judaism*[2] (not yet put into English notwithstanding its value and enormous influence) German opinion has become much more favourable to the trustworthiness of these Aramaic parts. Graetz, Nöldeke, Torrey, and Kent regard them as pure forgeries of the Chronicler, who was anxious to win respect and increased devotion for Judaism by representing it as having received in the past the sanctions of kings and governments. This is not, however, the impression which an unprejudiced reading gives. The language of these documents agrees so closely with that of the Aramaic papyri as to prove that they belong to the same period, viz. the fifth century B. C., though Torrey, in his latest contribution to the subject[1], makes a gallant but bootless attempt to prove the contrary. Wellhausen pronounces these documents spurious, but he assumes their genuineness when constructing his history of Israel. The weightiest objection to the historicity of the Aramaic section is their strong Jewish colouring, just as, it is supposed, the Chronicler might be expected to give them. This applies also and, indeed, specially to the Cyrus edict, i. 2–4, which Meyer, by a singular inconsistency, holds to be a fiction of the Chronicler. But we have to note these things :

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[1] *PSBA.*, xxxi. 89–99, 156–68.

[2] *Die Entstehung des Judenthums*, Halle, 1896.

1. The Persian king would be sure to have about him Jewish officials to advise him when dealing with Palestine and its people.

2. When drawing up edicts or the like in which Jewish interests were favoured, especially when Jewish requests were granted, it is not unreasonable to think that he left the wording to Jews.

3. We know from the history of Persian kings that they were in the habit of associating themselves with the various nationalities subject to them in the religions they professed. In the well-known clay cylinder of Cyrus (reproduced in substance in *Century Bible*, Isa. vol. ii, 342 f.) this king, though a Persian, speaks of himself as the servant of Marduk (Merodak), Babylon's principal god, and as restoring to their sanctuaries the deities whom Nabonidus had taken away. We have a very remarkable example of this in the Gadatas inscription found in Magnesia to

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[1] *AJSL.*, April, 1908.

the east of Thessaly in 1889. In it Darius, son of Hystaspes, complains of the way in which the Persian governor, Gadatas, had treated the priests of Apollo in the above province. He recognizes in Apollo the deity who has spoken to his ancestors and helped them. When Cambyses conquered Egypt and made Uzahor, an Egyptian priest, his chief physician, the latter so wrought on the mind of his master that the Persian king gave orders for the restoration of the cultus and temple of the goddess Nît (mother of the Sun-god) at Sais, and accompanied the act by many expressions of esteem for that deity[1]. There need not be any insincerity in the language used by Cyrus in Ezra i, or in that ascribed to Artaxerxes in Ezra vii. 12-26. All along the Persian is thinking about his own Ahura-mazda, called by different people under other names and viewed in varying ways, yet all the while the same one supreme Good Spirit. That ancient Zoroastrianism was capable of taking this philosophical view of the religions of the world, of seeing the one in the many, is proved by what we know of it (see p. 40).

Moreover, there is great probability that the Persians were well disposed to Judaism on account of its many affinities with their own religion, as e. g. its high ethical spirit, its Dualism, &c. It was the Persian's lofty conception of the Supreme Deity that led him to create the conception of a rival spirit to whom was ascribed the evil that is in the universe. Moreover the Sachau Aramaic papyri (§§ 13 f.) tell us that when Cambyses, son of Cyrus, campaigned in Egypt he spared the Jewish temple at Yeb, though he destroyed the sanctuaries of the Egyptians, the priests of the latter being probably sowers of disloyalty among the people.

**T$_R$** denotes **T** as edited by a later Redactor.

**C.** City records, that is, written notices concerning the population, registers of clans, families, and of civil officials, accounts of building operations—wall buildings, &c. I include also under **C** the sections describing the work of both Ezra and Nehemiah, and as far as subject-matter is concerned the autobiographical parts (see **E** and **N** below) might also be subsumed here.

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[1] Cheyne, *Jewish Religious Life after the Exile*, pp. 40 ff.

**C**$_{A}$. This symbol will stand only for Ezra iv. 7–23, which, though in Aramaic, has to do with the rebuilding of the walls and not of the Temple.

**E.** The Ezra biographical history, the 'I' sections of Ezra, viz. vii. 27–ix.

**N.** The Nehemiah autobiographical history, containing Nehemiah's own account of his coming to Jerusalem and of his work there. This embraces Neh. i–vii. 5 (to which should probably be added verses 6–73$^{a}$) + xiii. 4–31. Hardly any writer has ventured to impugn the genuineness or authenticity of this 'I' record.

**R.** Parts due to a Redactor or Redactors. It is quite the fashion to make the Chronicler responsible for what, in this volume, is ascribed to a Redactor or Redactors. The resemblances between Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah in words, phraseology, and point of view, are held to prove that one man, or at least men of one school, edited, co-ordinated, and assimilated all these books. But the fact that the differences are more striking than the resemblances makes this supposition quite untenable.

1. In Ezra-Nehemiah singers and porters form classes outside of the Levites (cf. Ezra ii. 40 ff. (see on); Neh. vii. 43 ff., x. 28, &c.). In Chronicles the general word 'Levites' includes all (see 1 Chron. xxiii. 3–5, &c.). The departures from this distinction are probably the result of late editing; they are, however, but few, notwithstanding the averments of Torrey to the contrary.

2. The same genealogies differ in Ezra-Nehemiah and in Chronicles (cf. Neh. xi and 1 Chron. ix). Had the whole Ezra-Chronicles been fashioned by one governing mind he would have prevented such discrepancies.

3. There are other differences which one general editor would have removed, such as that between the two accounts of the observance of Tabernacles in Ezra already noticed (see p. 10).

4. Chronicles is consistently at the point of view of **P**, but Ezra-Nehemiah views things prevailingly from an earlier point of view: see on Neh. ix. 6–37.

5. The stage of law and custom in Ezra-Nehemiah agrees in many important respects with that implied in Malachi, so that a similar date for both is highly probable: see under 'Date,' p. 18 f.

6. We come across the phrase 'Aaronites' (lit. sons of Aaron) constantly in Chronicles as in **P** (see especially Ex. to Num.), but only once is it found in Ezra-Nehemiah and in a context (Neh. xii. 47) that has many marks of late date: see, however, Ezra vii. 5, and Neh. x. 38. Moreover, the subdivisions of the Levites (Gershonites, &c., see 1 Chron. vi. 16 ff.), a prominent feature in Chron., are passed over in silence in Ezra-Nehemiah.

7. The means of support of the priests and Levites differ in Ezra-Nehemiah (see Neh. x. 35 ff.) and Chronicles (see 1 Chron. vi. 54 ff.).

8. We have ample external evidence, Jewish and Christian, that in very ancient times Ezra-Nehemiah was treated as one book, but there is not a particle of such evidence that Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah formed one whole.

9. For a discussion of the Aramaic sections of Ezra see p. 12 ff. These are ascribed to the imagination of the Chronicler by many who hold Ezra-Nehemiah to be largely the work of the Chronicler.

10. The dominant position of the priesthood in Chronicles does not confront us in Ezra-Nehemiah. There are civil, as well as religious heads, and the former (cf. Zerubbabel, Nehemiah) bulk much more largely in the history and the records than the latter. Yet there is the beginning of what in Chronicles is consummated. The priests are named apart from the Levites (Ezra ii, Neh. vii), and in the case of Eliashib we see a man who in Nehemiah's absence exercised a power reminding one of the priest-kings of Maccabean days (Neh. xiii. 4, 28).

It is assumed that whatever sources have been used and are indicated in the text have been more or less edited by **R**.

## V. DATE OF EZRA-NEHEMIAH.

Ezra-Nehemiah seems to reflect the same set of circumstances that are implied in Malachi. This is in particular true of Nehemiah, in which as in Malachi these three things stand out :—

1. Laxity in the priesthood. See Malachi i. 6–ii. 9; cf. Neh. xiii. 4–9, 28.

2. The neglect of the payment of tithe. See Malachi iii. 7–12; cf. Neh. xiii. 10–14.

3. Mixed marriages. See Malachi ii. 10–16; cf. Neh. ix. 2; x. 28, 30; xiii. 23–29; Ezra ix. 1 ff.; x. 1 ff.

In the extant book of Ezra 3 only of the above finds a place, but in the complete Ezra records, which probably existed at one time, the other evils might likewise have been dealt with. The closer affinity of Malachi and Nehemiah has, however, led many scholars (Kuenen, Kirk., &c.) to fix the date of Malachi during the second visit of Nehemiah in 432 B.C.

But there are several points in Malachi which link it with the time before the priestly code came into vogue. The word 'Levites' has the broad sense of **D**, and not the narrow meaning it bears in **P** and Chronicles: see ii. 4; iii. 3.

Priests and Levites are differentiated also in Ezra-Nehemiah,[1] but there is as yet no antagonism between the two classes, and, in fact, the priests receive their support in part by the hands of the Levites. See Neh. x. 32 f. This would suit a period 460 B.C. or so.

Morever the Heb. word *minkhah* has in Malachi the generic sense 'an offering of any kind' as in the older codes: see i. 10f., 13; ii. 12 f.; iii. 34. So apparently in Neh.

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[1] See Ezra i. 5 and the note on.

xiii. 5. In P it has the meaning 'cereal' (E.VV. 'meal') in distinction from the 'animal' offering *(zebakh)*. It is probable, therefore, that Malachi was written before 458 B. C. (W. Rob. Smith, Wellh., Now., Marti), or at latest before the publication of the complete Hexateuch (G. A. Smith).

It is, of course, quite possible for the language of a former day to be kept up after it has ceased to express the ideas of the actual time; but this prophecy is serious; it seems to come red-hot from the times, and to be as realistic as any sermon or sermons could well be.

There are in Ezra-Nehemiah some touches which show late editing if nothing more. Ewald's contention[1] that the expression 'Cyrus, King of Persia' belongs to a time when the Persian supremacy had become a thing of the past, though largely adopted, has little to support it. If, as history shows, Cyrus had in 538 but recently become king of Persia, it would be natural in this record to give him this designation: or there might have been others bearing this name when this history was written. The expressions 'Saul, King of Israel,'[2] 'Hiram, King of Tyre,'[3] 'Rehoboam, King of Judah,'[4] and 'Shishak, King of Egypt,'[5] do not mean that when they were first written the various kingdoms implied had ceased to exist, though we may not know for certain why the name of the country is appended.

In Neh. xii. 11, 22, in the lists of high-priests, Jaddua is mentioned as third after Eliashib, i. e. three generations after Nehemiah's time, for Nehemiah and Eliashib were contemporaries. Now this Jaddua must be the high-priest of that name whom Josephus[6] brings into connexion with Alexander the Great, and who must therefore have functioned about 330 B. C.

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[1] *History of Isr.*, i. 173.
[2] 1 Sam. xxix. 3.
[3] 1 Kings ix. 11.
[4] 1 Kings xii. 27.
[5] 1 Kings xiv. 25.
[6] *Antiq.* viii. 8, 5, and 9, 1.

As he is named last, and as if he were a contemporary of the writer, these verses at least seem to belong to about 330 B. C., though Vitringa, Keil, Ewald, and Rawlinson may be quite right in saying that these verses are late insertions.

The words 'in the days of Nehemiah'[1] could not have been written during that leader's lifetime, but that does not help much in ascertaining the date of the book. It is not unlikely that the use in Neh. i. 11 of the word *Adonai* (Lord), apparently for *Yahweh*, implies a date subsequent to the introduction among the Jews of the custom of substituting the former for the latter. But we do not know when this custom began; all that can be definitely said is that it is older than the oldest part of the LXX.

The context makes it highly probable that 'Darius the Persian' in Neh. xii. 22 is Darius Codomannus (336-233 B. C.), but, as already remarked, the whole of this verse has been largely held to be an interpolation.

Zunz, Rosenzweig, Nöldeke, and Reuss make Ezra-Nehemiah a product of the third century B. C. if not later. But even the latest parts are a sufficient answer to this, for the last high-priest known to the final redactor is Jaddua (about 330 B. C.), and the remaining parts of these books have every impress of a much earlier date.

One may safely say that Ezra-Nehemiah as a whole is made up out of contemporary records kept in the Temple or elsewhere, sacred and civic: that with very few exceptions the final editing was completed before the publication of the P code, i. e. prob. before 400 B. C. But there are some marks of a later date, though so few and isolated as to make it probable they are not original parts of these books.

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[1] Neh. xii. 26, 47.

## VI. SOME RECENT DISCUSSIONS BEARING ON THESE BOOKS OR ON THE HISTORY WHICH THESE BOOKS CONTAIN.

During the last half-century more discussions have arisen and more books been written about Ezra-Nehemiah than about any other equal portion of the Old Testament, and we seem as far as ever from finality on the matter. To these discussions British scholars have contributed but little, though the writings of Sayce, Ryle, Sir Henry Howorth, and Cheyne bearing on the subject are worthy of praise. America is represented by the radical and destructive criticism of Torrey[1], who has found followers in his fellow countrymen H. P. Smith, C. F. Kent, and perhaps L. W. Batten. The books and articles by Dutch (Kuenen, Kosters, &c.), French (v. Hoonacker), and especially by German (Bertheau-Ryssel, Sellin, &c.) scholars are legion. In the limited space allowed in this volume the present writer is unable fully to state, much less adequately to estimate, the opinions put forth.

1. Up to the time of W. H. Kosters (d. as Professor at Leyden in 1897) the books of Ezra-Nehemiah were generally considered by scholars to rest on contemporary sources, and therefore to be historical—with but slight exceptions. It was Kosters who started the theory that throughout these two books the Chronicler has been busily at work, altering, transposing, and inventing to make the whole tally with his notions of the religious history of Israel. In the result we have much more of the Chronicler than of the historian. Kosters, however, did not deny or call in question the main facts of Ezra's life and work as they are portrayed in Ezra vii–x, though he regarded Ezra vii–x as the creation of the Chronicler's mind, and held the true chronological order to be Nehemiah-Ezra, not the contrary. Dr. C. C. Torrey, of Yale Univer-

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[1] See Bibliography, p. 37.

sity, proceeded further along the path opened up by Kosters[1], for he holds that the only genuine and authentic parts of the two books are the Nehemiah memoirs (Neh. i-vii. 5). He agrees with Renan[2] that the Ezra memoirs were fabricated by members of the priestly (Renan adds, the Pharisee) classes, who could not tolerate the thought that the re-establishment and purification of Judaism were the doing of a layman, and so they invented the priestly character Ezra and ascribed to him a rôle not second to that of Nehemiah. But unlike Torrey Renan accepts as historical the events narrated in Ezra i-vi, i. e. the return under Zerubbabel and Joshua, and the rebuilding of the Temple mainly by returned exiles, though he holds there were many parties returned from Babylon at as many different times.

The following are the principal grounds on which Renan, Torrey, &c., reject the tale of Ezra—told in Ezra vii-x. (1) Nehemiah does not mention Ezra or his work. But nothing in Biblical literature is more remarkable than the silences of writers and workers about each other, cf. Amos and Hosea; Isaiah and Micah; Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zephaniah; Haggai and Zechariah. (2) Ezra is apparently unknown to Ben Sira[3] and to the author of 2 Maccabees[4]; but see under 1. Torrey has put together a large number of words and idioms found in Ezra vii. 1-10 which occur also in Chronicles. But note

(*a*) Many of those adduced are to be seen also in other post-exilic writings of the O.T., showing that they belong to the period which followed the return.

(*b*) There are, as previously remarked, terms and expressions in Ezra vii-x showing an acquaintance with older sources (**JE**, **D**, &c.), but none at all with **P**, and related Scriptures. Geissler has brought together a large collection of such[1].

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[1] See *Composition and Historical Value of Ezra-Nehemiah*, 1896, and more recent articles in *AJSL*.

[2] *Histoire*, &c., Livre VII, cap. viii. Books I-VI have alone been translated into English.

[3] Sir. xlix. 12 ff.

[4] See i. 10 ff.

(*c*) There are linguistic features in Ezra vii–x which, though post-exilic and absent from **D**, are absent from Chronicles, and suggest sources different from those followed by the Chronicler.

It is not without significance in this connexion that Ezra belongs to the priestly class as does the Chronicler. They might, therefore, be expected beforehand to have similar interests and to be characterized by similar modes of speech.

2. Kosters, following Vernes, held that the second Temple was built by Jews who had never been in exile, and not, as would appear from Ezra i–vi, by returned exiles. The principal reasons mentioned are these:

(1) Nothing is said by Haggai or Zechariah in urging the people to complete the building, implying that those addressed were returned exiles. In reply it may be said that there is not a syllable in the writings of these prophets suggesting that the builders were not returned exiles. The theme with which these preachers are occupied is the work, not the workers.

(2) Kosters, Cheyne, and others maintain there was no return under Cyrus, or none deserving the name; the first important batch of exiles being that led by Ezra. This involves the position that the official Aramaic documents in Ezra are spurious, as also the Cyrus edict in Ezra i. 2–4. Meyer[2] has, however, made it practically certain that the Aramaic extracts in Ezra are *bona fide* and are the product of the period to which in Ezra they are assigned, and the same reasoning proves that the Cyrus proclamation is also genuine, though possibly tinged by Jewish influence: see p. 40 and on Ezra i. 1–4.

On the other side the following points are weighty:

(*a*) Such a return is implied in II Isaiah, where Cyrus is referred to by name or otherwise. He is Yahweh's friend, who executes His will and says to Jerusalem, 'be built,' and to the Temple, 'let thy foundation be laid [1].' Yahweh calls him His anointed one, who on account of the task allotted him of delivering Israel is enabled to triumph over all his foes.[2] These words and the like represent hopes and expectations in Israel about the time in question, and if they are *post eventum* in their origin, all the same they prove that the event implied had taken place, or the writer would not stultify himself by expressing as expectations things which the actual facts of the time proved to be impossible.

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[1] See *op. cit.*

[2] *op. cit.*

(*b*) If no return about 538 B.C. took place, what are we to make of the words *gôla* and *bene gôla* ('exile' and 'exiles') which stand in contradistinction to the 'people of the land' in 2 Kings xxiv. 14, xxv. 12, and elsewhere? These returned exiles are spoken of not only in Ezra i–vi, but also in Ezra ix. 4, x. 6; Neh. i. 2 f. Of the people left in the country a few joined themselves to the community fresh from Babylon, but they are never mentioned by themselves as an independent social unit, and in the account of the rebuilding and of the reforms they are virtually ignored. Eight years or so after the return the Jewish community in and about Jerusalem has the name *gola*, i. e. exiles, or the congregation of the *Gola* [3].

(*c*) The character given by Ezekiel (see xxviii. 23 ff.) to the unexiled Jews does not make one think they were the people to have much concern about the restoration of the Temple and also of Jewish orthodoxy. Indeed, the second Isaiah in his forecast of the new time leaves them out of account, and Jeremiah speaks of them with no more respect than Ezekiel.

It is evident from many parts of Ezekiel that the prophet and his companion exiles expected a return: see xxxvi. 8–15. Not at all improbably this expectation was awakened by the movements of Cyrus and a knowledge of the policy he pursued towards deported people.

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[1] xliv. 28.

[2] xlv. 1 ff.

[3] Ezra ix. 4, x. 6, 7, 16.

[4] Ezra x. 8; cf. Neh. i. 2 f.

3. The French writers de Saulcy, Havet, Vernes, Imbert, Halévy[1], and especially v. Hoonacker (Roman Catholic Professor at Louvain) and the Dutch scholar Kosters[2], have endeavoured to prove that the true chronological order is Nehemiah-Ezra and not the contrary, or at least that Nehemiah's attempts at reform preceded those of Ezra. Some of their reasons are the following :—

(1) When Ezra arrived at Jerusalem he found the city in a peaceable and orderly condition, which, it is said, implies that the walls had been repaired and the city otherwise fortified. But how can we so argue when our knowledge of the state of things is so meagre? Of the sixty years preceding Ezra's arrival we know nothing—what in that interval took place we have at present no means of finding out.

(2) If (it is said) the reforming measures of Ezra had been taken before the arrival of Nehemiah the latter must have mentioned them. One may turn the same argument against v. Hoonacker and Kosters and say, if Nehemiah's reforms antedated the arrival of Ezra, the latter must have made some allusion to them. In fact any *argumentum e silentio* is precarious, especially if it has reference to the writings of the O. T.: see p. 10.

(3) It is further maintained that Ezra's reforms were much more radical and extreme than those of Nehemiah, for whereas Ezra demands the divorce of all foreign wives[3], Nehemiah goes no further than to forbid intermarriage between Jewish children and the children of foreigners[4]. The work of Nehemiah has therefore, it is inferred, all the appearance of being tentative and intro-

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[1] *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 1886, 334–58.

[2] *op. cit.*

[3] See Ezra x. 11 f.

[4] Neh. xiii. 25.

ductory to that of Ezra. Here again the reasoning is of the *a priori* kind, and in reply one may say that the failure of the more drastic reforms attempted by Ezra would be sure to lead to milder measures. Moreover, the rise and growing influence of the Samaritan party led to a broadening of sympathies and outlook which the Persian officials would be sure to encourage. Indeed, such a latitudinarian tendency, alike in belief and in the cultus, grew and spread throughout the land until it was suddenly checked by the Maccabean uprising. Among those who make Ezra's reforms follow upon Nehemiah's there are considerable divergences of opinions as to details. v. Hoonacker[1] says Ezra came to Jerusalem first of all in the reign of Artaxerxes I, and for a time worked with Nehemiah, but soon returned to Babylon, whence he set out again for Jerusalem in the reign of Artaxerxes II, i. e. about 398 B. C., this time armed with great authority, which he used in putting down the mixed marriages. Kosters[2] puts the work of Ezra after the incidents of Neh. xiii. Wellhausen[3] seems to think that the reading and expounding of the law (Neh. viii) by Ezra belong to the period of Nehemiah's second visit, though he does not deny the arrival of Ezra in 458 B. C., or call in question the part ascribed to him in putting down mixed marriages.

Franz Buhl, Professor of Arabic at Copenhagen, for some years Franz Delitzsch's successor at Leipzic, has recently published a history of Israel in Danish in which in the relevant portion he endeavours to make good the following theses :—

1. That Nehemiah, having received the king's permission, came to Jerusalem in 445 B. C., repaired the walls and introduced certain social reforms, returning thereupon to Susa after an absence of twelve years, Neh. i–vii. 5.

2. Subsequently Ezra came from Babylon to Jerusalem,

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[1] *Nouvelles Études*, &c., 270 ff.

[2] *op. cit.*

[3] *Geschichte*(6), 177 f.

bringing with him the law book which he endeavoured to put into practice. His efforts to put an end to mixed marriages were however unsuccessful, whereupon he returned to Babylon, Ezra vii-x.

3. Nehemiah finding Ezra's efforts unavailing returned to Jerusalem, and succeeded in carrying out in a less drastic way the reforms which Ezra failed to carry out, Neh. xi-xiii.

It is noteworthy that the reasoning by which it is sought to prove that Ezra's visit, or at least the bulk of his work, followed that of Nehemiah is almost exclusively of the *a priori* kind, and can be met by *a priori* considerations of a contrary kind. In no codex, edition, or version of the Hebrew Bible has any different order of the history of these Jewish leaders been found, and tradition, Jewish and Christian, is completely on the side of the old view—Ezra first then Nehemiah. Tradition has indeed in other things been proved to be wrong, but it can be discarded only at the call of evidence clear and cogent.

4. Much has of late years been written as to the relation between the Canonical Ezra and the Apocryphal 1 Esdras (Vulg. 3 Esdras), which in matter coincide in the main. 1 Esdras is, however, more extensive than Ezra, for at its beginning (ch. i) it has 2 Chron. xxxv. 1–xxxvi. 21, and at its close (ix. 37–55) it adds Neh. vii. 73$^b$–viii. 12, besides which it inserts 1 Esdras iii. 1–vi (Darius and the three youths, guards of the royal chamber, Zerubbabel being one of them). From the fact that 1 Esdras, besides embracing Ezra, has also at its beginning and end parts of Chronicles and Nehemiah, it has been concluded by many modern scholars that our present 1 Esdras is but the fragment of an older document which included Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah in that order.

Moreover a large number of scholars, especially of recent times, take the view that 1 Esdras represents the true LXX, the original Canonical Ezra corresponding to it having been lost. So Whiston[1], Pohlmann, Ginsburg, Cheyne, Howorth[2], Bertholet, Nestle, and Torrey. Bertholet, Torrey, and others maintain that the section 1 Esdras iii. 1–v. 6, which is unworthy of its context, and moreover contradicts chronologically the preceding chapters, is a late interpolation and had no Hebrew original. Howorth, however, strenuously argues for the genuineness of this part of 1 Esdras, holding, as others have before him, that its Greek is interlarded with Hebraisms (Deissmann and Moulton would hardly allow the designation), just as is the rest of the book.

What has passed as the LXX of Daniel, and as such is printed in copies of the LXX, has in recent years been proved in reality to be Theodotion's version, the true LXX rendering being found in the so-called Greek codex Chisianus (from the family Chigi who owned it). In a similar way it is argued that the Greek version of Esdras now found in the LXX is in reality Theodotion's version, 1 Esdras representing the LXX version.

The evidence offered is external and internal.

1. *External.* (*a*) Josephus uses it in all cases, though for other books it is the LXX he follows. In fact for the period covered by 1 Esdras, Josephus's history is little more than a paraphrase of this book.

(*b*) There are, Howorth says[3], strong reasons for believing that in Origen's Hexapla 1 Esdras takes the place of our LXX version.

(*c*) In the foreword to the Syriac version of 1 Esdras in Walton's Polyglot it is said that this version was made from the LXX.

(*d*) In the Syriac version of Paulus of Tella, 1 Esdras takes the place of the Canonical Ezra.

(*e*) Howorth will have it[4] that in the *Vetus Itala* also 1 Esdras had the place which in our Bible Ezra holds.

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[1] *Essay on the Text of the O.T.*

[2] See articles in *Academy*, Jan., June 1893; *PSBA*.

[3] *PSBA*. xxiv. p. 156.

[4] *loc. cit.* 168.

2. *Internal evidence.* (*a*) It is held by Dr. Gwyn[1], Thackeray,[2] and Howorth that the Greek of the true LXX of Daniel is remarkably like that of 1 Esdras, though, as Thackeray remarks, this proves only that one man translated both. On the contrary, Howorth adds that the present LXX of Daniel and of Ezra are both very literal, as we know Theodotion's version was. The present writer has read the two Greek texts, that of Ezra and that of 1 Esdras, without feeling strongly the cogency of this latter remark. Similarly Howorth endeavours now to prove that the Apocryphal *Prayer of Manasseh* represents a portion of the true LXX of 2 Chron. xxx. 3.[3]

Keil, followed by Bissell and (formerly) by Schürer[4], held that 1 Esdras is a compilation based on the LXX version of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. The grounds for this conclusion and a succinct discussion of other views can be seen in Bissell's valuable commentary on the Apocrypha.

Herzfeld, Fritsche, Ginsburg, Thackeray, Nestle, and (formerly) Ewald hold that 1 Esdras is an independent Greek translation from a now lost Hebrew (or Aramaic) original in many respects superior to our M.T. This is the latest view of Schürer[5], and it is that supported by Howorth.

The opinion advocated by Ewald in the later editions of his *History* is that 1 Esdras is the result of a working over of an earlier Greek translation now lost. This assumes that there were two independent Greek translations of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah, as we now know there were of Daniel.

The notes in this volume on Ezra-Nehemiah will show that the present writer has often found 1 Esdras more serviceable in the restoration of the correct Hebrew text than the M.T. On the other hand he has had in at least as many instances to reject the readings implied in 1 Esdras. And certainly 1 Esdras iii–v. 6 cannot have formed a part of the original 1 Esdras in either Hebrew or Greek, for it stands in contradiction to the rest of the book, forms no essential part of it, and, moreover, occupies lower ground than the rest of the book.

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[1] Smith, *DB*$^{(2)}$., Esdras A. [2] Hastings, *DB.*, i. 761 B.

[3] *PSBA.* xxxi. 89 ff.

[4] *History of the Jewish People*, ii. iii. 179 f.; *Herzog*$^{(2)}$, i. 496 f.

[5] *Herzog*$^{(3)}$, i. 637.

On the whole 1 Esdras has a better sequence of events than our Ezra-Nehemiah (see on Neh. vii. 73 $^{b}$ ff.), and it represents not improbably a better Hebrew (and Aramaic) original, in which case it is to be reckoned a part of the true LXX of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah.

## VII. CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.

The period covered by Ezra-Nehemiah was on the whole a barren one from the literary point of view, as might have been expected, for it was a time of national reconstruction, and the energies of the leaders of the people were spent in the work of restoring the old institutions, and reorganizing the new community.

Cheyne[1], Briggs[2], and other writers on the Psalter, agree that in the early and middle Persian period, i.e. in the period which comprehends the life and work of Ezra and Nehemiah, there was a great burst of sacred song. Among such Briggs reckons forty whole psalms and portions of ten others. All the so-called 'persecution psalms' are included (Ps. xxvi. &c.), the persecutors being the Samaritan party. Though certainty on the matter is unattainable, for no one of these psalms bears decisive date-marks, yet strong evidence of an accumulative kind supports in a general way the conclusions of Cheyne and Briggs, which in the main agree. Renan in his *History*[3] connects a large number of the same psalms with this period. The so-called 'royal' or 'theocratic psalms'

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[1] *Origin of the Psalter*, p. 230 *et passim*. [2] Ps. i, lxxxix f.

[3] Book vii, untranslated into English.

(xciii–c, except xciv) are commonly interpreted as voicing the confidence in the Divine rule which the deliverance from Babylon called forth (see on Ps. xciii, Introduction, *Century Bible*).

It has been already shown that Malachi must have been composed before 458 B.C., or at latest before 444 B.C.[1]

Another literary product of the time is, according to most recent scholars, the Book of Ruth, written primarily as a protest against the prohibition of mixed marriages by Ezra and Nehemiah. The writer might himself have been guilty of the very sin which these leaders so strongly denounced; but in any case he seems in this charming idyll to champion the cause of foreign women, who like 'Ruth the Moabitess' (constantly so called by a kind of delicate irony) had married into Israel, and whom it seemed cruel to cast adrift to shift for themselves, a precarious task for an Eastern woman.

Isa. lviii. 13 f. and Jer. xvii. 19–27, each enforcing strict sabbath observance, are connected by modern criticism with Neh. ix. 14 and xiii. 15–21, and made to arise under the influence of the same religious movement. Both passages stand apart from their present context, and are regarded by most recent scholars as late interpolations. It is significant that the Sabbath is not once referred to in II Isaiah (except in the above verses), Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Psalms, Proverbs, Job, or even in Genesis, except in the account of its establishment (ii. 2 f. P).

Large portions of Isaiah besides the above are assigned to the Persian period. Duhm regarded practically the whole of Isa. lvi–lxiv (called by him 'Trito-Isaiah') as belonging to the time of Nehemiah, and (except in lxiii. 7–lxiv. 12 (Heb. 11), and other smaller sections) Cheyne and Whitehouse follow him. According to Cheyne and Driver

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[1] See p. 18 f.

Isa. xxiv–xxvii (Cheyne and Whitehouse add xxxiv f.) belong to the close of the Persian period (*circa* 350?). See for details the commentaries on Isaiah, especially Marti and also Whitehouse, *Century Bible*.

## VIII. IMPORTANT DATES IN JEWISH, PERSIAN, &C HISTORY.

N.B. All the dates are B.C.

| JEWISH. | PERSIAN. | GREEK, EGYPTIAN, &C |
|---|---|---|
| | Babylon conquered by Cyrus, 538. | |
| First return of Jews from Babylon, 537. | | |
| Foundation of the Temple laid, 536. | Temple built by Jews at Elephantinê (Yeb)[1], cir. 536. | Rule of Pisistratus d. 527. |
| Haggai and Zechariah prophesy, 520. | Reign of Cambyses, 529–522. | Ionian revolt agains the Persians, cir. 509. |
| Completion of the Temple, 515. | Conquest of Egypt by Cambyses, 527–525. He destroys the temples of the Egyptians, but spares the Jewish temple at Elephantinê.[1] | |
| | Pseudo - Smerdis reigns, 522. | Battle of Marathon, 490. |
| | Reign of Darius I (Hystaspis), 521–486. He invaded Europe cir. 500. | Egypt revolts, but is reconquered by Persia, 488–486. |
| | Reign of Xerxes, 485–465. | Battle of Thermopylae and Salamis, 480<br>Herodotus and Aeschylus fl. cir. 460.<br>Battle of Plataea and Mycale, 479. |
| | Reign of Artaxerxes I(Longimanus), 465–424. | Revolt of Inaros in Egypt, 462–456. |

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[1] See Sachau, Aram. Papyri, 13 f.; cf. Sayce-Cowley, *Aram. Papyri.*

| JEWISH. | PERSIAN. | GREEK, EGYPTIAN, &C. |
|---|---|---|
| Composition of Malachi and Isa. lvi–lxvi (with some exceptions, see below), cir. 460. | | |
| Second return of Jews (under Ezra), 458. | | Revolt of Megabyzus in Syria, 448. |
| Nehemiah's arrival at Jerusalem; reform in social life and the cultus; repairing of the walls, all in 445. | | Building of the Samaritan temple on Gerizim, 334–331. |
| Isa. lviii. 13 f. and Jer. xvii. 19–27, written cir. 444. | | Peloponnesian war, 431–404. |
| The Priestly Codex completed, 440. | | Socrates, Sophocles, Aristophanes fl., cir. 420. |
| Nehemiah's second visit to Jerusalem, 432. | | |
| Secession of the Samaritan party, cir. 430. | Xerxes II murdered by his half-brother Sogdianus, 424. | |
| Jews at Elephantinê appeal to Jews at Jerusalem for help to rebuild their temple[1]. | Reign of Darius II (Nothus), 423-404. | |
| The Prophecy of Joel, cir. 404. | | Euripides, Plato, Xenophon fl., cir. 400. |
| Publication of our Hexateuch, cir. 400. | Reign of Artaxerxes II (Mnemon), 404–359. | Defeat of Cyrus II at the battle of Cunaxa, 401. |
| | He sends his rescript to the Greeks, 387. | Xenophon conducts the 10,000 Greeks back, cir. 400. |

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[1] See Sachau, *Aram. Papyri.*

| JEWISH. | PERSIAN. | GREEK, EGYPTIAN, &C. |
|---|---|---|
|  | Reign of Artaxerxes III (Ochus), 359–338. |  |
| Jaddua, high-priest at Jerusalem, 351–323. | Darius III (Codomanus), 338–331. |  |
| EZRA-NEH. completed, cir. 320. | End of the Persian Kingdom, 331. | Alexander the Great conquers and annexes Persia, 331. |
| Onias I became high-priest, 323. |  | Wars of the Romans with the Samnites, 343–290. |
|  |  | Ptolemy I (Lagos), reigned at Alexandria, 323–285. |
| Capture of Jerusalem by Ptolemy I, 320. |  |  |
|  |  | Ptolemy II (Philadelphus) reigned 285–247. |
| Antiochus III conquers Palestine, 203. |  | First (264), second (218), and third (149) Punic wars. |
| Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), tormentor of the Jews, reigned in Syria, 175–164. |  | Treaty of Philip with Hannibal, 215. |
| The revolt of the Maccabees, 167. |  | First Macedonian war, 210. |
| Jonathan made high-priest by Demetrius, 153. |  |  |
| Simon succeeding Jonathan as high-priest becomes also prince, 142. |  | ROMAN. |
| John Hyrcanus, king from 134. |  | Tiberius (133) and Caius (123) Gracchus Roman tribunes. |
| Alexander Jannaeus from 103. |  | Birth of Cicero and Pompey (106), and of Julius Caesar (100). |

The books of ESTHER, Judith, 2 Macc., and Jubilees belong to about 100.

# ABBREVIATIONS.

## 1. GENERAL.

*acc.* = accusative.
B.C., in the usual sense, occurs only where there can be any doubt. All the Biblical dates in these volumes are B.C.
*fem.* = feminine.
*Hiph.* = Hiph'il.
*impf.* = imperfect.
*impv.* = imperative.
*masc.* = masculine.
*Ni.* = Niph'al.
*pass.* = passive.
*perf.* = perfect.
*part.* = participle.
*Pi.* = Pi'el.
*prep.* = preposition.
*pron.* = pronoun.
*AJSL.* = American Journal of Semitic Languages.
*COT.* = *Cuneiform Inscriptions and the O. T.*, by E. Schrader, translated by O. C. Whitehouse.
*KAT.*$^{(3)}$ = The third edition of the same (really a new work) by Winckler and Zimmern, 1902.
*DB.* = Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible.
*ENCYC. BIB.* = Encyclopaedia Biblica (Cheyne).
*G. K.* = Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, edited by Kautzsch, Oxford, 1898.
*PSBA.* = Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology.
*SDB.* = Hastings' small Dictionary of the Bible.

Hiph., Ni., and Pi. denote forms of the Hebrew verb which express (most commonly) the following modifications of the simple idea of the verb (i.e. the Qal): causative, passive, and intensive respectively.

J (Jahwist), E (Elohist), JE (Jehovist), D (Deuteronomist), and P (Priestly Writer) stand for the authors of the documents on which the Pentateuch (or Hexateuch) is supposed to be chiefly based.

## 2. TEXTS AND VERSIONS.

### 1. HEBREW.

*M.T.* = Massoretic Text. (That of the ordinary vocalized Hebrew Bible.)
*SBOT.* = Sacred Books of the O. T. (general editor, P. Haupt; Ezra-Neh., edited by Guthe-Batten).
*ket.* = ketīb. (The consonants and the implied vowels of the Hebrew Bible.)
*qr.* = qᵉrē. (The text as emended by the Massorites.)
*Heb.* = Hebrew.

### 2. GREEK.

*LXX* = The Septuagint.
*Aq.* = Aquila.
*Theod.* = Theodotion.
*Sym.* = Symmachus.
*Luc.* = The Lucian recension of the LXX: closer to the M.T. than the LXX.
1 *Esd.* = 1 Esdras (Apocrypha). Esdras A of the LXX, 3 Esdras of the Vulgate.

### 3. LATIN.

*Jero.* = Jerome.
*Vulg.* = Vulgate.

### 4. ENGLISH.

*A. V.* = Authorized Version.
*R. V.* = Revised Version.
*E. VV.* = The above two Versions.
*O. T.* = Old Testament.
*N. T.* = The New Testament.

The Arabic (*Saadia*), Ethiopic, and Syriac (Pesh.) versions have been constantly consulted in Walton's Polyglot. For Targum I (Targ.[1]) on Esther Walton's Polyglot and Buxtorf's Rabbinical Bible have been used. Cassel's edition of Targum II (Targ.[2]) has been the one referred to.

## COMMENTARIES.

A large number of Commentaries in various languages have been consulted, but below will be found those to which the present writer feels himself most indebted.

*Ber.* = Bertheau.
*Berthol.* = Bertholet (in Marti).
*Ber.-Rys.* = Bertheau-Ryssel.
*Guthe-Batten* (*SBOT.* for the text).
*Jahn, G.*, 1909.
*Kamphausen* in Bensen's *Bibelwerk.*
*Kautzsch* = *Die Heilige Schrift.*
*Keil.*
*Oettli* in Strack-Zöchler.
*Rawl.* = Rawlinson in *Speaker's Commentary.*
*Ryle* in *Cambridge Bible.*
*Schultz* in Lange.
*Siegfried* in *Nowack.*

## OTHER LITERATURE REFERRED TO.

See the histories of Jost, Herzfeld (2), Ewald (3), Graetz (2), Stade, Schürer (3), Wellhausen (6), A. Klostermann, Guthe, the edition used being indicated by the bracketed index number after the name.

Adeney, W. F.: 'Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther,' *Expositor's Bible* 1893.
Cheyne: *Jewish Religious Life after the Exile*, 1898.
Geissler: *Die litter. Beziehungen*, &c., 1898.
Hoon. = v. Hoonacker: *Néhémie et Esdras*, 1890; *Nouvelle Études*, &c., 1896.
Howorth, H.: Articles in *Academy* (1893, &c.) and in *Proceeding of Society of Biblical Archaeology.*
Jamp. = Jampel, Sigmund, *Die Wiederherstellung Israels*, 1904 Contains useful matter, but ill digested and often inaccurate.
Kalisch, *Heilige Schrift.*
Kamp. = Kamphausen in Bunsen's *Bibelwerk.*
Kent, C. F.: *The Student's Old Testament*, 1905, &c.
Kosters, W. H.: *Die Wiederherstellung*, &c. (from the Dutch, 1895)
Kuenen-Budde: *Ges. Abhandlungen*, 1894.
Marquart: *Fundamente israelitischer und jüdischer Geschichte*, 1896
Meyer, E.: *Die Entstehung des Judenthums*, 1896; *Die Geschicht des Alterthums*, Band iii, 1901.

Mommert, C.: *Topographie des alten Jerusalem*, Theile i–iv, 1900–1907.

Nikel, J.: *Die Wiederherstellung des jüdischen Gemeinwesens nach dem babylonischen Exil*, 1900.

Sayce: *Introd. to Ezra-Neh.*, 1885.

Sellin: *Serubbabel*, 1898; *Studien zur Entstehung*, &c. ii, 1901.

Smend, R.: *Die Listen*, &c., 1881.

Smith, G. Adam: *Jerusalem from the Earliest Times to* A.D. 70, 2 vols., 1908.

Smith, W. Robertson: *Religion of the Semites* (2); *The O.T. in the Jewish Church* (2); *The Prophets of Israel* (2); *Kinship and Marriage among the Arabs* (2).

Torrey, C. T.: *Composition and Historical Value of Ezra-Neh.* Also articles in *American Journal of Semitic Languages* (1908–9).

## NOTATION OF SOURCES (see p. 12 ff.).

$T$ = Temple records.
$T_A$ = Temple records in Aramaic.
$C$ = City records.
$C_A$ = City records in Aramaic.
$E$ = Ezra, autobiographical parts.
$C_E$ = City records dealing with Ezra's work.
$T_E$ = Temple records dealing with Ezra's work.
$N$ = Nehemiah, autobiographical parts.
$C_N$ = City records dealing with Nehemiah's work.
$R$ = Parts due to a Redactor or to Redaction.

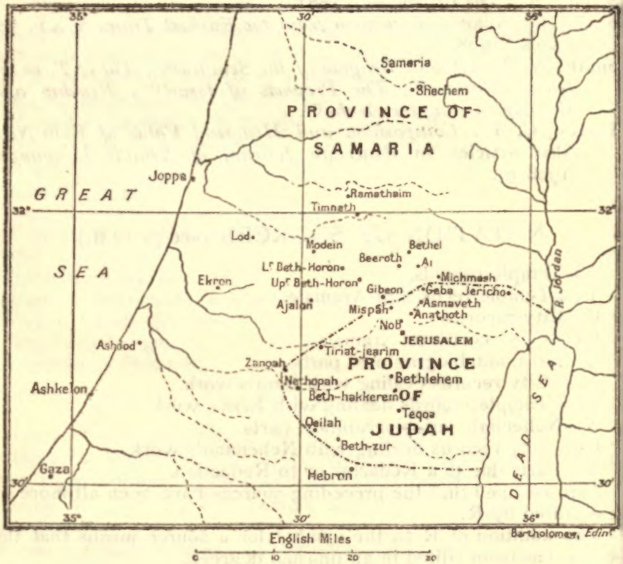
It is assumed that the preceding sources have been all more or less edited by R.

The addition of R to the symbol for a source means that the source has been edited in an unusual degree.

$U$ = Unknown sources.

N.B. When renderings are given words put in brackets are added to make the sense clearer, but are not represented directly in the Heb., though often implied.

## PROVINCE OF JUDAH AFTER THE EXILE.


35°
30'
36°
Samaria
Shechem
PROVINCE OF SAMARIA
Joppa
GREAT SEA
Ramathaim
Timnath
32°
Lod
Modein
Bethel
Beeroth
Ai
Lr Beth-Horon
Upr Beth-Horon
Ekron
Gibeon
Michmash
Geba
Jericho
R. Jordan
Ajalon
Mispah
Asmaveth
Anathoth
Nob
JERUSALEM
Ashdod
Tiriat-jearim
Zanoah
PROVINCE OF JUDAH
Bethlehem
Netophah
Beth-hakkerem
Ashkelon
Teqoa
DEAD SEA
Qeilah
Beth-zur
Gaza
Hebron
Bartholomew, Edinr
English Miles
0
10
20
30

The Persian Province (or Governorship) of Judah, itself a par of the Satrapy of Transpotamia (see on Ezra ix. 8) was subdivide into districts (Heb. *pelek*), of which eight are mentioned in Neh. ii (verses 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19) and a ninth is implied (cf. secon half of Beth-zur, ver. 16). There might have been others. Juda and Samaria seem to have been separate provinces, each wit its own governor, though at times (as before the advent of Ezr and Nehemiah) the governor of Samaria had jurisdiction ove Judah also, as in the case of Rehum (see pp. 85, 170, and 260).

# EZRA

## I–VI. HISTORY OF THE RETURN OF THE FIRST BATCH OF EXILES FROM BABYLON AND OF THE EVENTS WHICH IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED. Date : 538 (first year of Cyrus) to 516.

For analysis of this section see Introd., p. 5, and for a discussion of the sources see Introd., p. 12 ff. It is quite clear that neither Ezra nor Nehemiah had anything to do with the composition of these chapters, the whole of which, with the exception of Ezra iv. 6–23, belongs to a period more than half a century before Ezra appears on the scene.

Ezra i (1 Esd. ii. 1–14). Cyrus authorizes and encourages the Jews of Babylon to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild the Temple.

Cyrus (Heb. *Koresh* ; Bab. *Kurash* ; Pers. *Kurush*) was probably a Persian, and therefore an Aryan, for in an inscription Darius Hystaspis speaks of 'Cambyses, son of Cyrus one of our race.[1]' Both Cyrus[2] and Darius I[3] were descendants of Achaemenes ; but Darius describes himself as a 'Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan, of Aryan descent,[4]' so that Cyrus must also have been a Persian and an Aryan. Sayce, on the other hand, maintains that Cyrus, as originally king of Anshan (or Anzan) in Elam, was an Elamite ; but being king of a province of Elam is no proof of Elamite nationality (see Sayce, *Records of the Past*, 2nd series, v. 144 ff., and *DB.* 'Cyrus'). Cyrus is called also King of Babylon, of Sumer, and of Akkad. There is, however, no certainty where exactly Anshan was, though, since de Morgan's discoveries, Assyriologists agree that it bordered on Susa and Southern Babylonia. If of Elamite origin, Cyrus was by upbringing a polytheist ; if of Persian origin he would be a Zoroastrian, and as such well disposed to that policy of toleration of other religions which we rightly connect with his name.

When king of Anshan he overcame the Persians, becoming king of both Anshan and Persia. With his augmented forces he marched against the Medes, now greatly weakened through attacks by Lydians and nomad tribes of Scythian race. He now aimed at augmenting his kingdom and securing its greater safety by adding to his conquests that of Babylon. Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon, had estranged his subjects in the provinces by his policy of removing the local gods to Babylon, just as Hezekiah had given offence to his country subjects by a similar policy in Palestine (see 2 Kings xviii. 22) ; religious centralization being in both cases regarded as the prelude to political centralization. Babylonians were on the whole glad to welcome Cyrus and his forces, knowing as they did that the 'great King' allowed and even encouraged every people to worship their ancestral gods and to continue the worship and sacrifice which had come down to them.

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[1] See the Behistun inscriptions, i. 10.

[2] *Records of the Past*, ix. p. 67. [3] Ib., p. 79, &c. [4] Ib., p. 75.

Cyrus and his army entered Babylon without opposition in 538, though according to Greek writers (the Babylonian priest Berosus, Xenophon, &c.) the Babylonians resisted and fought to the last.

The historicity of the edict of Cyrus has been generally questioned or denied, as by Kosters, Guthe, Torrey, and Cheyne, who hold that there was no return under Cyrus; and also by many who admit that such a return took place, as Wellhausen, Renan, Bertholet. It is said by Kosters and others that those parts of Ezra which ascribe to Cyrus the decree referring to the return from Babylon and the rebuilding of the Temple are inventions of the Chronicler to confirm what is said of Cyrus in Isa. xli. 25, xliv. 28, xlv. 1, &c. Cf. Joseph., *Antiq.* xi. 1. 2. But why, then, does not the Chronicler make Cyrus concern himself about the rebuilding of the city walls as well as the Temple? Moreover, it is said that the Chronicler ascribes to Cyrus his own sentiments, making the Persian king a follower of Yahweh, deeply solicitous about the interests of Judaism and its institutions. But recently discovered cuneiform inscriptions have taken off the edge of this objection, for in them Cyrus speaks the language of the peoples he conquered. Thus, when writing for Babylonians he says that the god Marduk had called him to be king, and he ascribes his success in war to the other Babylonian deities Bel and Nebo. What Cyrus is made to say of Yahweh in Ezra i. 2 is very strange until we find it and much else that in the narrative surprises us matched in inscriptions which have come down to us (see p. 14 f.). The Chronicler may be regarded as using here and generally in Ezra-Nehemiah older, and in the main reliable, sources.

It was the policy of the kings of Babylon to deport conquered people and to replace them by loyal subjects from the near territory. It was the policy of Cyrus and of his successors to encourage each subject race to retain its ancestral faith. Assuming that Cyrus was a Zoroastrian, he might see in the gods of other religions nothing more than the one supreme good spirit Ahura Mazda, who manifests himself in fire and light; in that case the seemingly compromising language of ver. 2 and of many of the inscriptions would but represent the king's broader conceptions and wider faith. See further on vi. 1-12.

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[1] Note how in the third Sachau papyrus Bagohi (Greek *Bagoas*) the Persian governor of Judah, in granting the request of the Jews at Yeb, speaks of Yahweh as the 'God of heaven' and promises that the Temple shall be rebuilt and the sacrifices restored.

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[T] Now in the first year of [a] Cyrus king of Persia, that 1
the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be
accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus

[a] Heb. *Coresh.*

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1–4. *The edict of Cyrus.* See 1 Esd. ii. 1–7. In Ezra vi. 3–5 we have another version, perhaps the very words preserved in Aramaic in the temple archives: see on these verses.

1–3*a* agree almost verbatim with the last two verses of Chronicles; see Introd., p. 4.

1. **Now:** in Heb. the particle usually translated 'and.' Its presence here is no necessary proof of an original connexion between this verse and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. The so-called 'waw consecutive' forms became independent tense inflexions implying in many cases no connexion with what has gone before. See A. B. Davidson, *Syntax*, § 47.

**first year** of his rule over Babylon, i.e. 538. It was the twenty-first year of his reign over Anshan. The inscriptions show that Cyrus reckoned his reign from Nisan after he conquered Babylon.

**king of Persia:** though this title is most commonly used after the Persian kingdom had ceased to be, i. e. after 331, yet it occurs in the contemporary Cyrus inscription, column 24, and is not therefore necessarily a proof of late date. In their memoirs Ezra and Nehemiah have simply 'the king,' e.g. Ezra vi. 14, vii. 27 f., &c.; Neh. i. 11.

**by the mouth of Jeremiah:** the reference is to Jer. xxix. 10, where Yahweh promises at the end of seventy years to restore his exiled people. Assuming that the exile commenced in 606, the seventy years would expire in 536, which may be the **first year** referred to in this verse, reckoning from the time when Darius the Mede ceased to exercise joint rule with Cyrus. But we have here to do probably with a round number.

**accomplished:** lit., 'come to an end.' The Hebrew word (rendered 'finished') is used also in Dan. xii. 7, of the fulfilment of prophecy. God's predictive word ceases, as such, when the event foretold has come to pass.

(**the Lord**) **stirred up the** (**spirit of Cyrus**): lit. 'awakened,' 'roused'; the same verb in ver. 5, 2 Chron. xxi. 16, and in Jer. xli. 11. The Chronicler ascribes Cyrus's resolve to permit the Jews to return to Divine suggestion. Such is also the view taken by the post-exilic prophet, the 'great unknown,' in Isa. xlv. 13. Josephus (*Antiq.* xi. 1. 1 f.) says that Cyrus was prompted by his reading of those parts of ii Isa. in which his name and predicted work appear: see Isa. xliv. 28, xlvi. 1; cf. xli. 28. The name by which Cyrus designates Yahweh = 'Yahweh (Israel's own God who is identical with the) God of heaven'

king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout
2 all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying, Thus
saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth
hath the LORD, the God of heaven, given me; and he
hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem,
3 which is in Judah. Whosoever there is among you of all

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(the God whom, as seen in the sun, &c., I as a Mazdaist worship). See for the title 'God of heaven' v. 11 f., vi. 9 f., vii. 12, 21, 23; Neh. i. 4 f., ii. 4, 20. This designation occurs in the Sachau Papyri: see i. 2, 28, &c. It is found also in Persian inscriptions.

**made a proclamation:** lit. 'he caused (a herald) to pass (the) message': the expression occurs in post-exilic literature only: see x. 7; Neh. viii. 15; 2 Chron. xxx. 5; Exod. xxxvi. 5 (P). See on viii. 21.

**2. All the kingdoms,** &c.: it has been objected that Cyrus could not have used such language, and that the words are those of the Chronicler. But in cuneiform inscriptions Cyrus expresses himself in a very similar way concerning the principal Babylonian god Marduk, who had called him when king of Anshan to be 'king of the world.' See column 12, 'Cyrus-cylinder.' 'Marduk called Cyrus and led his hosts towards Babylon.' 'Without fighting or bloodshed Marduk brought him to his city Babylon.' 'I, Cyrus, am king of the world, the great king, the mighty king,' &c. To Bel and Nebo (see Isa. xlvi. 1; Jer. l. 2) he ascribes much of his success. It is unscholarly and unfair to look at what is said of Cyrus and by him in the O. T. without also considering his general attitude towards nations whom he had subdued and the contemporary language in which he is made to express himself in inscriptions which must have received his sanction.

**he hath charged me to build him an house:** Cyrus is represented in more than one inscription as restoring to their original homes or temples the local gods brought by Nabonidus to Babylon; this would involve a restoration also of the local shrines. He is also made to say 'I left the gods of Sumer and Accad uninjured according to the command of Marduk my great lord.'

**3.** Render freely: 'Whoever there is of His (Yahweh's) people among you (my Persian subjects) [that is minded to depart] may his God be with him and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, that he may build (= rebuild) the house of Yahweh, Israel's God, that is the God whose special abode is in Jerusalem.'

**Whosoever . . . people:** i. e. whatever exiles from the Southern Kingdom. Cyrus could hardly have in his mind or have any knowledge of the Northern Israelites deported into Assyria, &c., by Sargon. His concern is with the restoration of his people, his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD, the God of Israel, [a] (he is God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever is left, in any place where 4

[a] Or, *he is the God which is in Jerusalem*

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the exiled people of Judah and the rebuilding of the temple destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Yet there is reason for believing that some exiles of the northern tribes returned with those from the south: see 1 Chron. ix. 31 and on ii. 3. As ver. 3 stands, Cyrus commands all Jewish exiles scattered in his dominions to return. We know that the great majority elected to remain in their new home and were not hindered from doing so. We must no doubt add to the commencement of ver. 3 the words in square brackets above; they occur in 1 Esd. ii. 3 (L Codex) and are adopted by Guthe (*SBOT.*), Bertholet, and others. See for confirmation ver. 5.

(his God) **be** (with him): in the parallel passage 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23 we have, 'his God will be' (LORD = Yahweh is a textual error) 'with him.' So the LXX in the latter and in the present passages.

(**he is God**), &c.: omit the brackets and render as above. Yahweh's temple has to be in Jerusalem, for it is there He has chosen to make Himself specially known to His elect people. So the Hebrew accents, the R. V., and the versions, including 1 Esd. ii. 5, though the Arab. has 'the house of the God of Israel, the God who is in the sanctuary'; and *Luc.* omits the phrase. If the E.VV. be adhered to, the sense is that the 'house of Yahweh . . . is in Jerusalem.' The former is the likelier view. The worshippers of Yahweh were under an obligation to re-erect the Jerusalem temple, for He dwelt on Mount Zion. See Ps. ix. 11, lxxiv. 2, lxxvi. 2, and cf. Psalms, vol. ii (*Century Bible*), additional note on *Zion.* In ver. 4 and elsewhere, however, the phrase 'which is in Jerusalem' (the same Hebrew words as here) describes 'the house of God,' and Ryle, &c., prefer this sense (retaining the brackets) here. Perhaps the bracketed words are the marginal gloss of a pious reader or copyist.

**4.** This verse may be thus paraphrased: 'Whoever is to be left behind in the place where he dwells (because he lacks the necessary means, though he has a mind to return to Jerusalem), let his fellow-countrymen in that place help him,' &c. Josephus (*Antiq.* xi. 1. 1) says many Jews preferred remaining in Babylon with their property. The verse is generally interpreted (so Ryle, &c.) to mean 'if a Jew living in any part of the Persian dominion has the mind but not the means to return, let his non-Jewish fellow-he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God which 5 is in Jerusalem. Then rose up the heads of fathers'

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citizens supply him with all that is indispensable for the journey'; and Neh. i. 2 and Hag. ii. 3 are adduced in support of this rendering. But it is the context that decides the shade of meaning to be given to a word in any given place. No king would give such a command as this, and if he did his subjects would not obey, Babylonians or others. One might gather from Neh. v. 1 that the returned exiles were not much helped by non-Jewish people.

**is left:** in Hebrew a pass. part. such as frequently has a gerundial force: 'Whoever would have to be left behind' (if not helped).

**sojourneth:** the verb = to settle in a country not one's own and to have substantially the rights of natives: see on Ps. cxix. 19 (in this Series).

**place:** probably = Jewish quarter, either part of a city in which Jews dwell together (ghetto), or a part of the country cultivated by them, as may be found now in Russia. If town or city were meant a suitable word would have been employed. **The men of his place** = his fellow residents in the same Jewish quarter or locality.

**help:** the Hebrew verb is the intensive (*Pi.*) form of the verb = to lift up, and has here the sense to support, to aid, as in viii. 36; Esth. ix. 3; 1 Kings ix. 11.

**silver and . . . gold:** to purchase food, &c., during the journey.

**goods:** camp-baggage, articles of furniture such as were necessary. The same word occurs in viii. 21; x. 8, and in Gen. xiii. 6. Guthe read the cognate word found in Esth. viii. 8, 10, rendered in the E.VV. 'swift steeds,' but meaning post or saddle horses; so *Luc.* and 1 Esd. ii. 6.

**beasts,** meaning animals for carrying the baggage (pack-horses, mules, camels, asses).

**freewill offering:** i. e. gifts of money, &c., towards the expense of rebuilding the Temple: see viii. 28; 2 Chron. xxxi. 14. The same word is used of gifts towards the building and furnishing of the tabernacle in Exod. xxxv. 29; xxxvi. 3. We are not to understand here (with Bertholet) free willing offerings such as even non-worshippers were allowed to present as sacrifices in the Temple. See Schürer $^{(3)}$, ii. 300 ff. (E.V. ii. i. 299 ff.) and cp. the act of Alexander the Great in sacrificing at Jerusalem.

5–7. *Many Jews avail themselves of the offer of Cyrus and return.*

**5.** Render, 'Then arose the heads of the fathers' [houses] of

*houses* of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, even all whose spirit God had stirred to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. And 6
all they that were round about them strengthened their

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Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, and all whose spirit God had stirred up to build Yahweh's house (the Temple) which is in Jerusalem.'

**the heads of fathers' houses:** the word 'houses' is understood in the Hebrew, and must be supplied in English. The full phrase occurs in Exod. vi. 14. A Jewish tribe was divided into families (or clans), each family (or clan) was subdivided into houses.

**Judah and Benjamin:** according to the older tradition Judah and Judah alone constituted the Southern Kingdom (see 1 Kings xi. 13, 32, 36; xii. 20; but in the latter passage the LXX has 'Judah and Benjamin'). Though Jerusalem was in Benjamin, and some Benjamites must at the disruption have sided with the Southern Kingdom and been merged in it, yet as a whole Benjamin was joined with Israel. We have here the later tradition which made the Southern Kingdom, and therefore the returned exiles, consist of these two tribes—Judah and Benjamin: see also 1 Kings xii. 21 and 23, and Ezra x. 9.

1 Esd. ii. 8 has 'families' for houses, which, as coming after 'tribes', is more suitable and was perhaps the original word.

**the priests, and the Levites:** according to Deuteronomy all Levites are priests: see p. 18.

**even** (all): render, 'and.' The Hebrew word (*l*) is usually construed as a preposition with the meaning 'to.' If kept it is what is called the 'lamed of the norm,' defining and limiting what precedes, viz. 'those heads of houses (or families), priests and Levites whose heart,' &c. But we should probably read with the versions, including Esd. ii. 8, the conjunction 'and' (*waw*). Not only the three classes enumerated but 'all whose hearts,' &c. But this addition implies that of the classes named only those are meant who were similarly moved by God.

**to build**: i.e. here to rebuild: see Neh. ii. 5.

**the house of the LORD** (God): the Chronicler's common designation for the Temple: see iii. 4, 8; vi. 22.

**6. all . . . round about:** i. e. the Jews who elected to remain: see on ver. 4.

**strengthened their hands:** render, 'helped them': so *Luc.*, Vulg., and 1 Esd. ii. 9, as against the LXX, Syriac, Arabic, which render the Hebrew literally. The same phrase with a slight difference occurs in vi. 22; Neh. vi. 9. Cf. Isa. xli. 15, where the simple, not as here the intensive, form of the verb is used.

hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and
with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was
7 willingly offered. Also Cyrus the king brought forth the
vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar
had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in
8 the house of his gods; even those did Cyrus king of

**vessels of silver:** read and render 'with every kind of thing, with silver,' &c.: so *Luc.*, 1 Esd. ii. 9. The difference in the Hebrew is slight. The vessels are not mentioned before ver. 7. But the M.T. is supported by the other versions.

**goods . . . beasts:** see on ver. 4.

**precious things:** the same word is found in 2 Chron. xxi. 3, xxxii. 23; Gen. xxiv. 53. The enumeration in ver. 4 has nothing corresponding to this, and it is likely that its presence here is due to textual corruption. 'Gifts' is the rendering of the LXX, Syriac, Arabic. Perhaps we should read and render 'freewill offerings according to the wealth of the person who made a freewill offering.'

**beside,** &c.: see above.

7-11. *Cyrus restores the temple, vessels taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar.*[1]

**7. vessels:** these had been removed from the Jerusalem temple on three different occasions, viz. when in 597 Jerusalem was conquered in the reign of Jehoiakim—the most valuable, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; in the end of 597 when Jehoiachin was made prisoner, 2 Kings xxiv. 13; and 587, in Zedekiah's reign, 2 Kings xxv. 14 f. Here the first are more particularly and perhaps exclusively meant.

**Nebuchadnezzar:** see on ii. 1 and Esther ii. 6.

**house of his gods:** for **gods** substitute 'god' as in Dan. i. 2, though the Hebrew admits of both. Marduk (Merodach), the principal deity of Babylon, is the one meant. Only one temple is mentioned: had 'gods' been intended we should have had houses' (= temples). In Dan. i. 2 the same phrase is explained (perhaps in a marginal gloss) as 'the treasure house of his god,' i. e. a part of the temple where records, money, &c. were preserved (see *DB.* 'Treasury'). See Neh. x. 38. In *Luc.* and 1 Esd. ii. 10 we have 'idol-temple,' the (one) word used in 1 Cor. viii. 10. In 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7, the phrase is 'his (the King's) palace' (not temple as the E.VV.: in Chron. the word *haykal* has its original Assyrian meaning 'palace' and no other).

**8.** Render, 'So Cyrus, King of Persia, having brought them

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[1] The Jews had no images of gods to be restored as was the case with other peoples who had now come under Cyrus's sway.

Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince

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orth (from the temple treasury) delivered them into the charge (*lit.* hand) of Mithredath the treasurer, and counted them,' &c.

**by the hand:** in the *Luc.* and in 1 Esd. i. 11 a verb precedes, 'gave' (*Luc.*) or 'deliver' (1 Esd.), and it is to be restored with Guthe, &c., to the M.T., and the whole phrase rendered as above.

**Mithredath:** a Persian word meaning 'dedicated to Mithra' (the Persian sun-god). The same name appears in Roman history (cp. Mithridates, King of Pontus).

**the treasurer:** i. e. the person in charge of the treasure-house. See on v. 17.

**Sheshbazzar:** a Persian official, though a Babylonian by race, as his name (=*Shamash-bal-uṣur*, i. e. Sun-god protect the son[1]) suggests. Previous to the victories of Cyrus this man had probably been a high official of the Babylonian government, and so besides having an intimate acquaintance with the royal treasures he would have a large knowledge of Jewish people with whom he must have had to do. He seems to have been appointed to execute the King's decree in the first instance, to hand over moneys, temple vessels, &c., to divide the territory, and to make the first general preparations for the rebuilding of the temple. Having performed these preliminary tasks, he probably returned to Babylon, leaving the control of things to his successor Zerubbabel, who was a Jew, and in the direct line of descent from David, for he was grandson of Jehoiachin, King of Judah (1 Chron. iii. 17). Both Sheshbazzar (Ezra v. 14) and Zerubbabel (Hag. i. 1, &c.) are called 'Governor of Judah,' the same Hebrew word being used. Had our records not been so scanty, many of them being lost, we should have been informed of the circumstances under which Zerubbabel, the Jew, succeeded Sheshbazzar, the Babylonian. We know that Zerubbabel was the governor in 520, when through the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah the rebuilding of the temple was resumed. Moreover, Zerubbabel was one of those who came with the first batch, see ii. 2, so that he was a contemporary of Sheshbazzar, and at first probably a subordinate official. In Greek the name appears variously as *Abassaros* (Joseph. x. 1. 3); *Sassabassaros*, &c. (LXX): *Sabasare* (*Luc.*); Sanabassar (1 Esd. ii. 15, &c.). Imbert, Renan, Kosters, and E. Meyer identify him with Shenazzar, son of King Jeconiah (=Jehoiachin), see 1 Chron. iii. 17f. In that case he was Zerubbabel's uncle and also a Jew. But there is no evidence of that identity; not a word in accounts of either to suggest relationship with the other.

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[1] So Fried. Del., v. Hoonacker, and Sayce. E. Meyer (*Die Entstehung, &c.*, 76 f.), however, and others, reading Shenazzar (Sanabassar) identify with *Sin-bal-uṣur*, i. e. 'O Sin, protect the son.'

9 of Judah. And this is the number of them: thirty
chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and
10 twenty knives; thirty bowls of gold, silver bowls of a

That Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel are but two names of one individual is assumed by Joseph. (*Antiq.* xi. 1. 5), and by the author of 1 Esd. (see vi. 18), and is the view held generally in former times (Ewald, &c.) and, to a considerable extent, at present (Ryle, &c.). The tendency of later writers is to make the two names stand for two men: so Renan, Kosters, Stade, Kuenen, Wellhausen, Cheyne, Meyer, Klostermann, Guthe, and Siegfried. In favour of this is the fact that two names are used, both of them common Babylonian names, not as was formerly thought one Hebrew and the other Babylonian; and that in ch. v. (cp. verses 2, 15) a distinction is clearly made. Yet it must be admitted that the evidence is not very decisive either way. Kuenen[1] thinks Sheshbazzar never was governor, the passages stating or implying that he was being inaccurate. But this is to make history, not to construct it out of existing materials.

**9. chargers:** render 'libation cups,' the original word, occurring here only in the O.T., seems to be a loan-word from the Greek κάρταλλος 'a basket,' unless the Greek word comes from a similar one with a similar meaning in Semitic (Arabic, Aramaic, Ethiopic), or from the Persian. Basket-shaped libation cups are what is probably meant: see 1 Chron. xxviii. 17: they were used for pouring forth the drink offering: cp. Exod. xxv. 29. This is the rendering of 1 Esd. ii. 13. The LXX and *Luc.* translate 'wine coolers,' referring to the shape probably. Perhaps the word has a more general sense and includes also the 'basons' used for dashing sacrificial blood against the altar. See 1 Chron. xxviii. 17; 2 Chron. xxix. 22.

**knives:** render 'censers': the word in M.T. occurs nowhere else, and the sense is for that reason indeterminate, though the root in this case has the appearance of being Semitic if not Hebrew The original text had probably the Hebrew word for 'censers found in 1 Kings vii. 50, 2 Chron. iv. 22: this does not differ much from the M.T., and it is implied in 1 Esd. ii. 13, though Syr., LXX and *Luc.* have 'changes' (of garment), a sense suggested by the root of the Hebrew word which = to change.

**10. bowls:** so 1 Esd. ii. 13 (*phiale*). Etymology (which is however, uncertain) suggests the meaning 'covered' or 'lidded vessel,' 'tankard': but the sense of the word and the purpose of the vessel implied are obscure. The LXX and *Luc.* transliterate. Rashi and Ibn Ezra say that the word has here the same sense as that translated 'basons' in 1 Chron. xxviii. 17.

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[1] *Ges. Abhandlungen* (Budde), 220 f.

second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a
thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five 11
thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar
bring up, when they of the captivity were brought up
from Babylon unto Jerusalem.

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**second sort:** it is almost certain that the Hebrew word is a corruption of some numeral: 1 Esd. ii. 13 has 'two thousand,' making in all two thousand four hundred and ten bowls. The other versions have 'double' (LXX, *Luc.*) or 'second' (Vulg.). Rashi and Ibn Ezra agree with the E.VV. But silver bowls would, as such, be different from gold ones, and analogy shows that no other difference is intended. The last part of the word in the M.T. agrees with the last part of the word for 'two thousands' in unpointed Hebrew, and by substituting this the difficulty in reconciling the details of the numerals with the sum total is diminished: see below.

*The numerals in verses* 9-11. If the numbers of the various vessels named in ver. 9 f. are added together they reach a sum total of 2,499; but in ver. 11 it is said that the sum total reached is 5,400. Many attempts at reconciliation have been made, but no one has commanded or deserves much confidence. Keil thinks the mistake lies in the sum total and not in the details, 5,400 being written for 2,500 by a transposition of the 5. But we have even then 2 for 4, and since the exact numbers are given for the items we should expect the same to be done for the summing up. Besides, all the versions practically agree in the total (1 Esd. ii. 14 has 5,469), though they differ somewhat in the items. For thirty chargers of gold 1 Esdras has 'one thousand,' and it has 2,410 bowls instead of the 410 found in M.T. and in the remaining versions. If these two changes are introduced into the Hebrew text we get the same total as in 1 Esdras, viz. 5,469. Perhaps here as elsewhere the Apocryphal Ezra preserves the true text, unless we are to see in it a harmonistic recension. The corruption in the M.T. is ancient, since the versions except 1 Esdras follow the M.T.

On the face of it the numbers in ver. 9 f., as given in the M.T., &c., are more plausible. One might expect the number of gold vessels to be fewer in each case than the number of silver ones. In 1 Esdras there are one thousand chargers of both gold and silver. On the other hand, 2,400 silver bowls (ver. 10) are very many in comparison with thirty of gold.

*The gap between chaps.* i *and* ii. It is strange that after informing us in chap. i in general terms of the departure from Babylon the historian should tell us nothing about the march, its commencement, the line of route, incidents of the journey, when and under what circumstances the arrival took place, how long the journey lasted, &c. It does seem as though a section of the book dealing with these and kindred matters has been lost, and it is not unlikely that Ewald, Bertheau, Ryssel, Sellin, and others, are right in seeing a fragment at least of that section, though in a mutilated form, in 1 Esd. i–v. 1–6. These verses are in the style of chap. i, and bear clear traces of translation from a Hebrew original. Moreover, in their present setting they are out of place, and an evident interpolation inserted to connect the legend of the contest between the three young men (1 Esd. iii f.) with the narrative resumed in 1 Esd. v. 7. Darius's name has been inserted in place of the original Cyrus to make the piece fit in with the two preceding chapters. As amended by Bertheau (who omits the whole of ver. 5) these verses read as follows:

'1. Afterwards the chiefs of fathers' houses were chosen to go up according to their tribes, together with their wives, sons, daughters, menservants, womenservants, and their cattle. 2. And Cyrus (not Darius) sent along with them a thousand horsemen, to bring them back in safety to Jerusalem, with musical instruments, tabrets and flutes. 3. And all their brethren played, and he caused them to go up with them together. 4. And these are the names of the men who went up, according to their families, to their tribal possessions into their several districts; 6. in the second year of his reign, in the month Nisan which is the first month' (or, 'on the first day of the month').

A glance at the map (see opposite title-page) will show that the route lay first of all NW. towards Carchemish, then turned SW. and S., thus avoiding the almost untraversable regions of the Syrian and Arabian deserts (see p. 169 f.). It took Ezra and his companions four months to compass the same journey, and it would require more rather than less time to cover this distance now, as the way would be less familiar and perhaps less safe. If we accept the above addition to Ezra i it will be seen that the security and enjoymen of the travellers were well seen to, as the latter were accompanied by horsemen and musicians. It should be added that Schrader Reuss, Ryle, Bertholet, and others object to filling up the gap between i and ii from 1 Esdras.

### II (see Neh. vii. 6–$73^a$ and 1 Esd. v. 7–45). List of those who returned in 538.

After giving a description of the royal edict authorizing th return to Jerusalem of as many of the exiles in Babylon as ha a mind to go, it was natural to add an account of those wh availed themselves of the offer thus given, their clans, the town ships to which before the exile their families belonged, togethe with statistical information regarding the number of laymen

Temple officials, &c., who joined in the procession. Besides, the privilege accorded by Cyrus was confined to *bona fide* Jews, and it is natural to think that this list was drawn up in Babylon, according to older lists, so that it might be known who had a right to join the returning band, though in cases of genuine doubt the side of those making the claim seems to have been favoured, see verses 59-63. Notwithstanding the fact that the list belongs primarily to this period it bears marks of having been edited in later times. It is not to be doubted that the records of kings and their reigns, including genealogies, &c., were kept in the Temple archives at Jerusalem; and when the Babylonians conquered the city they are likely to have carried them to Babylon to be deposited in the Babylonian archives. Among the precious things which Cyrus returned to the Jews when he became their king, one may include as many of these old records as could be found. These would be helpful in drawing up the lists in Ezra ii and Neh. vii.

The persons mentioned in this chapter belong to the following classes.

1. *The twelve leaders*, including Zerubbabel and Jeshua. Though in Ezra ii. 2 only eleven are named, it is evident from the paralleled list in Nehemiah, 1 Esdras, and from other considerations, that originally there were twelve names. Ewald and others see rightly in this a desire on the part of the Jews to preserve the number twelve in their national organization. They were now but two tribes, but they were guided and governed by twelve princes.

2. *The laymen*: verses 3-35, ‖ 1 Esd. v. 5-35, Neh. vii. 8-38.

(1) Reckoned by clans, verses 3-19. The Hebrew phrase is literally 'sons of,' which means 'belonging to,' or, 'of the clan of,' 'Parosh,' &c.: see on ii. 41.

(2) Reckoned by original (or present actual?) abode of the clan: verses 20-35.

3. *Temple officials*: verses 36-57, ‖ 1 Esd. v. 24-35; Neh. vii. 39-60.

(1) Priests: verses 36-39.
(2) Levites: ver. 40.
(3) Singers: ver. 41.
(4) Porters (gate-keepers): ver. 42.
(5) Nethinim: verses 43-54.
(6) Solomon's servants: verses 55-58.

4. *Those of doubtful Jewish descent*: verses 59-63, ‖ 1 Esd. v. 36-40; Neh. vii. 61-65.

(1) Laymen: ver. 59 f.
(2) Priests: verses 61-63.

Meyer (*Entstehung*, p. 160) contends that those of undoubted Jewish descent belonged to the tribes of Judah or Benjamin (see on, xi. 3-24, 25-36); but there is nothing in Ezra-Nehemiah about tribes. In the strict sense they had long ceased to exist.

5. *Men and women servants*: ver. 65, || 1 Esd. v. 41; Neh. vii. 67.

Following the above we have a statement of the sum total of the persons and of the beasts of burden (verses 64-67), and an enumeration of the gifts which the persons brought with them for the Temple (ver. 68 f.).

This list occurs not only in this chapter and also in the parallel section in 1 Esdras, but also in a different context in Neh. vii; though, however, the sum total (42,360, see Ezra ii. 64) is the same in all the three lists, there is considerable divergence as to names and the detailed numbers. In no case do the separate items when added up reach the above sum total. If we add together the number given of the several classes (laymen, &c., verses 3-65) we reach the following results:

In Ezra 29,818.

In 1 Esdras 30,143.

In Nehemiah 31,089.

Learned and ingenious attempts have been made to reconcile these figures with each other and with the sum total in which all the three accounts agree. But the disagreements are no doubt due to errors of copying, easily understood and commonly met with where numbers are concerned. The divergences do not touch any matter of principle, and as the space in this series of commentaries is necessarily so limited it is impossible to give here such parallel lists of names and numbers from the three sources (Ezra, Esdras, Nehemiah) as may be seen in the larger commentaries and such as any reader can easily compile for himself. Important divergences will be discussed in the verses where they occur. It may be added that the clearest and fullest comparative tables of the various name-lists of Ezra, Esdras, and Nehemiah are to be found in Rudolf Smend's still very interesting and valuable *Die Listen der Bücher Esra und Nehem.* (Basel, 1881). The proper names are given, however, in Hebrew and (in 1 Esdras, &c.) in Greek.

The following brief general remarks are all that can be found room for here:—

1. PERSONAL CLANS: verses 3-19. The clans, families, or houses of Ezra ii. 3-19 are subdivisions of tribes called after persons who are supposed to have founded them, though we know but little of most of the persons named. Since they occur in a similar order here, in viii. 1-4, x. 18-44, and in Neh. vii, x. 1-27, we may infer that they are mentioned in the order of honour, though this is purely a subjective inference, and it may be weakened by the fact that the places in the next part of the list occur also in a uniform order.

The names of many of the men after whom the clans are designated here occur in later lists (see above), from which it may be concluded that they are not names of *persons* who accompanied Zerubbabel and his party.

It seems almost certain that the clans mentioned in these chapters existed in Babylon, and even in the period before the exile. We are not to suppose that all the members of the clans came away in 538, leaving no representatives in Babylon. The contrary was undoubtedly the case, and in favour of this is the statement in Ezra viii. 13 that with Ezra the final batch of the Adonikam clan arrived leaving none behind them: see Ezra ii. 13, which says that 666 men of the clan came with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem.

2. LOCAL CLANS: verses 20–35. Some clans seem to have been designated according to their original homes, and it might be permitted to call these local clans, though the name is a new one and carries with it the writer's opinion that the Hebrew phrase 'sons of' or 'men of' a village or town has the same sense as 'sons of' a man, i. e. it denotes a clan. In ii. 27 f. and in Neh. vii. 26–33 the common phrase is 'men of' (cf. 1 Esd. vi. 18–21). Guthe holds that wherever 'clans' are meant the phrase 'sons of' was originally prefixed; the phrase 'men of' denoting the people of a district. See *SBOT.* 26 ff. He therefore attaches ii. 29–32 and 35 immediately to Ezra ii. 19, as they describe clans. But 'men of' = 'sons of' in Hebrew, both phrases meaning 'belonging to,' &c. And in the verses which he would remove, most, if not all, of the names are place-names. It is noteworthy that the places enumerated are nearly all in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem. Ewald (v. 88; Germ. iv. 104) held that the original decree of Cyrus authorizing a restoration referred only to Jerusalem and the neighbourhood close to it, the rest of Judah being held by the Edomites (see Mal. i. 4; Obadiah). But nowhere in the books of Ezra-Nehemiah are the Moabites mentioned as foes of Judah; and moreover, among the places are some not very near to Jerusalem, as e. g. Bethel, Ai.

3. LAY AND CLERICAL. From Ezra ii and Neh. vii (cf. Neh. ix. 38) it may be concluded that the lay element took precedence over the clerical, being named first. We have a confirmation of this in the order Zerubbabel-Joshua in every instance of the two names coming together (about 12) except one (Ezra iii. 2).

In the later form of the lists in Ezra viii, x and Neh. x members of the clerical class come first, suggesting that in the course of the century following the first return there was a gradual increase of clerical influence.

The number of Levites who came with Zerubbabel and with Ezra was relatively small, though in the time of Nehemiah some of them occupied important positions (see Neh. iii. 17 ff.).

The high-priesthood is but seldom spoken of or implied in these books: see, however, p. 114 f.

As regards the origin and value of the lists in Ezra ii and Neh. vii opinions may be arranged as follows:—

1. That these and the other lists in Ezra and Nehemiah are due to the vivid imagination of the Chronicler, who compiled them on the bases of some real genealogies to fill up the picture which he paints of the return under Cyrus and the restoration of religious institutions before the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. So Torrey (*The Composition and Historical Value of Ezra-Nehemiah*), Wellhausen, and others. In reply note—

(1) The same list is used on two different occasions, viz. Ezra ii and Neh. vii.

(2) That in Neh. vii the list occurs as part of the Nehemiah memoirs, which are about the most certainly genuine portion of the two books.

2. The bulk of Old Testament scholars accept the list as authentic.

According to the old and the majority of modern commentators and historians, the primary place of the list is in Ezra ii. This is what the natural reading of the text suggests, and it is so suitable in this connexion that it is better to adhere to this view unless there are insuperable obstacles in the way. The list is taken up in Neh. vii because it was needed for the purpose of ascertaining who could trace their descent from the first returned exiles. This is the view defended by Keil, Bertheau, Ryssel, Baudissin, Budde, &c.

Many recent scholars maintain that the original place of the list is in Neh. vii as part of the memoirs of Nehemiah, and that it has been misplaced in Ezra ii, where it has no proper connexion with what precedes or what follows. So Graetz, Kosters, Lord A. J. Harvey, Guthe, E. Meyer, and Sellin. Lord Harvey states the case for this view fully and clearly in the *Expositor*, 1893, vol. iii. 431–42; but his arguments do not carry conviction to the present writer. They are chiefly that in Neh. vii the list fits in well—I hold it suits in Ezra ii: that the Tirshatha in Ezra ii. 63 can mean no other than Nehemiah, which is exactly the opposite of the truth: see on that verse.

Moreover, the animals mentioned in Ezra ii. 66 are suitable in the connexion there implied; they are horses, mules, camels, and asses, such as would be needed for the journey to carry persons and baggage. In Neh. vii we should have expected the mention of animals for food and for sacrifice if the list belongs primarily to that chapter.

In 1 Esd. v. 4 the list is given as if those who went up to Jerusalem from Babylon did so in the reign of Darius (i. e. Darius Hystaspis, 521–486). This is no doubt to reconcile the chronology of this chapter with the interpolated passage about the contest between Darius's three pages (iii f.).

[a] Now these are the children of the province, that went 2
up out of the captivity of those which had been carried
away, whom [b] Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had
carried away unto Babylon, and that returned unto Jeru-
salem and Judah, every one unto his city; which came with 2

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[a] See Neh. vii. 6, &c. [b] Heb. *Nebuchadnezzor.*

**1–2.** Heading to the List.

**1. children of the province:** in Semitic 'sons' (the word here employed) is used for 'people belonging to.' The **province** is that of Judah (see ver. 8; Neh. i. 3, xi. 3), now a sub-satrapy of Transpotamia (see on Esther i. 1), having Jerusalem for capital and Sheshbazzar and afterwards Zerubbabel for governor. Here the reference is to natives of that province taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, who now, as far as living, together with their descendants, accepted the king's offer and left for Jerusalem.

**captivity:** the Hebrew word, though abstract, is used for the community of Jews in exile in Babylon, though the bulk of these now in Babylon had been born in that country. This chapter tells of as many of the Babylonian Jews as came with Zerubbabel in the time of Cyrus. Very many preferred remaining in their adopted home. Of course those who with Kosters and Cheyne deny there was any return under Cyrus, are compelled to explain away this verse and its context.

**Nebuchadnezzar:** RVm. 'Heb. Nebuchadnezzor,' which may also in unpointed Hebrew have been the spelling in i. 7, where the M.T. has final *ar*, as in the E.VV. (cf. LXX *Nabuchodonosor*). In the original Babylonian the form is *Nabu-kudurri-usur* (='O Nebo protect the boundary'), with which corresponds more nearly the form *Nebuchadrezzar* found in parts of Jeremiah and throughout Ezekiel. In late Hebrew *r* and *n* often interchange (cf. *bar* = *ben* = son).

**Jerusalem and Judah** = the capital and the rest of Judah, the former named separately on account of its importance. The common phrase is, however, 'Judah and Jerusalem': see iv. 6, v. 1, vii. 14, &c. In Neh. vii. 6 the order is as in this verse.

**every one unto his city:** i. e. the city to which his clan belonged. The words must, however, be understood freely, and with reference to a later time when the account was written; what is stated here was actually done as far as was and became practicable.

In Neh. vii. 7 and in ‖ 1 Esdras twelve leaders are mentioned, and not eleven, as here. It is probable that Nahamani has fallen out of this verse through a copyist's mistake. As to the number twelve, see remarks introductory to this chapter, p. 51.

Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, [a]Seraiah, [b]Reelaiah, Mor-
decai, Bilshan, [c]Mispar, Bigvai, [d]Rehum, Baanah. The
3 number of the men of the people of Israel: the children of
4 Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two. The
children of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.
5 The children of Arah, seven hundred seventy and five.
6 The children of Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua

[a] In Neh. vii. 7, *Azariah.*

[b] In Neh. vii. 7, *Raamiah.*

[c] In Neh. vii. 7, *Mispereth.*

[d] In Neh. vii. 7, *Nehum.*

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**2. Zerubbabel:** not yet governor: he is but one of twelve leaders. Sheshbazzar was governor during the journey and for some time after. The name, which means 'seed' or 'offspring of Babylon,' is a common Babylonian one, as the inscriptions show. He was son of Shealtiel according to iii. 2; Hag. i. 1, 12, 14, ii. 2, and Matt. i. 12. But in 1 Chron. iii. 18 f. he appears as son of Pedaiah, brother of Shealtiel. Perhaps Shealtiel died without issue and his brother Pedaiah, contracting a Levirate marriage with his sister-in-law, became the father of Zerubbabel, who would, however, be reckoned, according to the law, son of Shealtiel. See further on v. 1 f., and as to Zerubbabel's descent on 1 Chron. iii. 19 in *Century Bible.*

**Jeshua:** called Joshua (the older form) in Hag. i. 1, &c.; Zech. iii. 1, &c. In Neh. viii. 17 the well-known Joshua, son of Nun, is called by this (in Hebrew the shorter) name. He was son of Jehozadak and grandson of the high-priest Seraiah: see 1 Chron. vi. 14 f. (Heb. v. 40 f.) and 2 Kings xxv. 18 ff. Though high-priest, he and Zerubbabel formed with the other ten a kind of cabinet of equal leaders, who had during the journey and immediately after its completion to decide on matters of consequence, subject to the supreme authority of Sheshbazzar, the governor.

**Nehemiah:** not, of course, the man best known by that name Cf. Neh. i. 1. This was, and is, a common name among the Jews

**Mordecai:** probably identified by the author of Esther with the Mordecai of that book (see on Esther ii. 5, 6). But the name (= votary of Marduk) was and is a common one among Jews notwithstanding its idolatrous origin.

**people of Israel:** i. e. the lay portion of the population. In late Hebrew the common designation for the unprofessional class is 'the people of the land.' The word 'Israel' (for Judah) i used to imply that the tribes to which the exiled belong represen the totality of God's chosen people.

3–19. *Personal clans.* See preliminary remarks, p. 52 f.

**6. Pahath-moab:** lit. 'the governor of Moab,' because perhap

*and* Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve. The 7
children of Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.
The children of Zattu, nine hundred forty and five. The 8, 9
children of Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore. The 10
children of [a] Bani, six hundred forty and two. The chil- 11
dren of Bebai, six hundred twenty and three. The 12
children of Azgad, a thousand two hundred twenty and
two. The children of Adonikam, six hundred sixty and 13
six. The children of Bigvai, two thousand fifty and six. 14
The children of Adin, four hundred fifty and four. The 15, 1
children of Ater, of Hezekiah, ninety and eight. The chil- 17
dren of Bezai, three hundred twenty and three. The 18
children of [b] Jorah, an hundred and twelve. The chil- 19
dren of Hashum, two hundred twenty and three. The 20
children of [c] Gibbar, ninety and five. The children of 21
Beth-lehem, an hundred twenty and three. The men of 22
Netophah, fifty and six. The men of Anathoth, an 23

[a] In Neh. vii. 15, *Binnui.* [b] In Neh. vii. 24, *Hariph.* [c] In Neh. vii. 25, *Gibeon.*

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the founder of the clan, or he after whom the clan was named, held the position of governor of Moab in earlier days.

**12. Azgad:** the number here is 1,222; in ‖ 1 Esd. 3,222; in Neh. vii, 2,322. The discrepancy is due apparently to wrong copying.

**13. Adonikam:** a part only of this clan came with Zerubbabel; the part that remained joined Ezra's party: see viii. 13. In Neh. x. 16 the name appears as Adonijah.

20–35. *Local clans*: see preliminary remarks, p. 53. Local clans are designated 'son of' such and such a place. In ver. 27 f. the phrase is 'men of,' as it still more frequently is in Neh. vii (see verses 26–33).

**20. Gibbar:** read 'Gibeon,' as in Neh. vii. 25. The modern village, *El-Jêb*, about five miles north-west of Jerusalem, stands on the same site and preserves in a corrupt form the ancient name. See Josh. ix. 3 f.; 1 Sam. ii; 1 Kings iii. 4, &c.

**22. Netophah:** a priestly city according to 1 Chron. ix. 16; generally identified with the modern *Beit Nettef*, about a score of miles to the west of Bethlehem.

**23. Anathoth** = the modern *Anâtâ*, a village about four miles

24 hundred twenty and eight. The children of [a] Azmaveth,
25 forty and two. The children of [b] Kiriath-arim, Chephirah,
26 and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty and three. The
children of Ramah and Geba, six hundred twenty and
27 one. The men of Michmas, an hundred twenty and
28 two. The men of Beth-el and Ai, two hundred twenty
30 and three. The children of Nebo, fifty and two. The
31 children of Magbish, an hundred fifty and six. The
children of the other Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty

[a] In Neh. vii. 28, *Beth-azmaveth.* [b] In Neh. vii. 29, *Kiriath-jearim.*

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north-east of Jerusalem. Jeremiah was born at Anathoth (Jer. i. 1, xi. 21). See Neh. xi. 32.

**24. Azmaveth:** see Neh. xii. 29; in 1 Chron. viii. 36 the name of a person belonging to the house of Saul. Perhaps the place was named after the person. In Neh. vii it is called 'Beth-Azmaveth.' It has been identified with El-Hismeh, an eminence to the north of Anâtâ.

**25. Kiriath-arim, Chephirah, and Beeroth** were Gibeonite cities (Josh. ix. 17) lying to the north of Jerusalem.

**26. Ramah** = the modern *er-Râm*, some six miles to the north of Jerusalem. It was the home of Samuel (1 Sam. vii. 17).

**Geba** = the modern *Jeba*, some dozen miles north of Jerusalem, a priestly town in the territory of Benjamin. See Josh. xviii. 24, xxi. 17; Neh. xi. 31, xii. 29.

**27. Michmas**: a fortified town in Benjamin, seven miles north of Jerusalem, identified with the modern hill *Mukhmas.* See Neh. xi. 31.

**28.** The sites of **Bethel** (now *Beitin*) and **Ai** (to the east of it) are well known; they are about one and a half miles apart and some dozen miles north of Jerusalem. See Neh. xi. 31.

29 ff. Guthe (*SBOT.*) would place verses 29-32, 35 immediately after ver. 19, but without sufficient reason. See on 'local clans,' p. 53.

**29. Nebo:** called in Neh. vii. 33 'the other Nebo' to distinguish it from the Moabite town of the same name (Num. xxxii. 3, 38), though the word 'other' is omitted in Nehemiah by the LXX (Siegf.). We do not know where the Nebo of the present verse was, though some have identified it with the modern Isawiyeh, a village north of Jerusalem. The same place is mentioned in x. 43.

**31. the other Elam:** the Elam of ver. 7 seems to be a person. It is singular that the personal clan of ver. 7 has the same number

and four. The children of Harim, three hundred and 32
twenty. The children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven 33
hundred twenty and five. The children of Jericho, three 34
hundred forty and five. The children of Senaah, three 35
thousand and six hundred and thirty. The priests: the 36

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as the local clan of this verse, viz. 2,254. Probably ver. 7 was by a copyist's mistake repeated here, and then, to try and give it sense, the word 'other' was prefixed. We have the same apparent duplication in Neh. vii. 12, 33. 1 Esdras omits the second mention of Elam altogether, following probably a text in which ver. 33 was lacking.

**32. Harim:** another town (ver. 39) bore the same name.

**33. Lod** = Lydda (Acts ix. 32, &c.), about seven miles from Joppa on the way to Jerusalem, now called *Lud*. It is not mentioned in pre-exilic parts of the O.T., but is named in the Palestinian list of Thothmes III.

**Hadid** = the Apocryphal Adida (1 Macc. xii. 38, xiii. 13). It was a fortified city on the east of the Shephelah, now called *El-khadithah.*

**Ono:** a village somewhat to the north of Lydda. Its modern name is *Kefr Ana.*

**Lod** and **Ono** are named together, as here, in 1 Chron. viii. 12; Neh. vii. 35, and xi. 35. Neither is mentioned elsewhere in the O.T.

**34. Jericho:** now called *er-Riha*; about nineteen miles from Jerusalem due east, some two miles west of the Jordan, near to where that river debouches into the Dead Sea.

**35. Senaah:** since the inhabitants of this place assisted in the building of the walls of Jerusalem one may conclude that it was near to Jerusalem and five miles to the north of Jericho, as Eusebius and Jerome held, identifying it with the *Magdalsenna* of their day. See Neh. iii. 3 ('Has-sennah' = 'the place called Sennah').

36–57. *Temple officials.* Among those who returned we read of priests, Levites, singers, porters, and Nethinim, but no separate reference is made to high-priests, and that probably because no such class existed until after the exile. (In 2 Kings xii. 10 and xxii. 4, 8, xxiii. 4, the word 'high' is an interpolation, as the context proves.) In Ezra-Nehemiah the epithet 'high-priest' is used of Eliashib only (see Neh. iii. 1, 20, xiii. 28), though 'high-priest' for 'priest' in Ezra ii. 63 and Neh. vii. 65 would suit well. The first undoubted occurrence of the expression 'high-priest' is in the Books of Haggai (i. 1, &c.) and Zechariah (iii. 1, &c.), where it is applied to Joshua, the 'Jeshua' of Ezra and Nehemiah (see on ver. 2). The omission in the present context of any mention of

children of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred
37 seventy and three. The children of Immer, a thousand
38 fifty and two. The children of Pashhur, a thousand two
39 hundred forty and seven. The children of Harim, a
40 thousand and seventeen. The Levites: the children of

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a high-priest is an incidental confirmation of the truth of the story told and of the suitability of the list in Ezra ii.

36–39. *Priestly clans.* The four priestly clans of these verses represent probably the state of things in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. In the time of the Chronicler (see 1 Chron. xxiv) these four classes had by subdivision and perhaps incorporation expanded into the twenty-four courses, and in the manner of this historian these courses are traced all the way back to David, some seven hundred years before his own time!

**36.** The Jedaiah clan formed the second of the twenty-four courses enumerated in 1 Chron. xxiv (see ver. 7).

**of the house of Jeshua:** for the form of the name see on ver. 2. The sense and the rhythm of verses 36–39 support the view of Smend and Bertholet that this clause is a late addition to be rejected. It has caused endless trouble to commentators, no two of whom (if independent) seem agreed as to its meaning. If retained this Jeshua cannot be the high-priest of that name, for he has been mentioned in ver. 2; but the founder of a large class of priests, one which embraced the clan Jedaiah.

**37. Immer** appears in 1 Chron. xxiv. 14 as sixteenth of the courses.

**38. Pashhur** son of Immer according to Jer. xx. 1. No course of that name is mentioned in 1 Chron. xxiv.

**39. Harim:** another clan of the same name is mentioned in ver. 32. See Neh. iii. 11. In 1 Chron. xxiv. 8 it is mentioned as the third course. In Neh. vii. 40–42 the order Immer, Pashhur, Harim is as in the present section, but in Ezra x. 20–2 the order is Immer, Harim, Pashhur.

40–58. *Levites and their subordinates.* It is to be borne in mind that the term 'Levites' does not necessarily or even probably go back to an historical personality; Levi is never spoken of in the O.T. as an actual individual but once, viz. in Gen. xxxiv. And it is the fortunes of the tribe that appear to be here portrayed under the name of its eponymous head; as is also the case with Simeon in the same chapter. In Gen. xlix. 5–7 the same events are connected with the names Levi and Simeon, though in this case it is made quite clear that the tribes are meant.

In the early period of Israel's history the priesthood was not onfined to any one tribe, see Judges xvii, xix. In 2 Sam. viii. 18 avid's sons are priests.

With the introduction of the Deuteronomic legislation the riesthood came to be restricted to a guild or class called the Levites,' so that priests and Levites came to be synonymous, ee Deut. x. 8 f., xviii. 1 f.; 1 Kings xii. 31. The Deuteronomic egislation, involving the suppression of the local sanctuaries cattered up and down the country, meant the disestablishment of he priests who officiated at these sanctuaries. Deut. xviii. 6–8 (cf. Kings xxiii. 18) enacts that these priests on coming to Jerusalem re to be received into the Temple priesthood and to share its tatus and emoluments. For some unexplained reason (perhaps o many priests were not required), these country priests were not llowed to act as city priests, though they shared the revenues of he office (see 2 Kings xxiii. 8 f.). It is in Ezek. xl. 45 f. that we have he earliest distinction between the priests 'who kept the charge f the house' and the priests, the Zadokites, who of the Levites re those 'who approach Yahweh and minister to Him.' From zek. xliv. 9–14 we gather that the Levites were believed to have een guilty of idolatry, though the high places were as much Yahweh shrines as the Jerusalem Temple. As a punishment they re degraded and permitted to perform those lower offices only f the Temple which had been previously performed by foreigners, uch as keeping the gates, slaying the animals for sacrifice, &c. n Babylon, where in the absence of the Temple no sacrifice ould be offered, the distinction between these originally city and ountry priests would tend to be obliterated. Moreover, in the resence of a common foe, politically and religiously, all Jewish arties were likely to cling together. One may from this understand the reluctance of the Levites to leave Babylon for Jerusalem, where their priestly inferiority would be emphasized and made anifest. Hence only seventy Levites returned with Zerubbabel, s against 4,289 priests (Ezra ii. 36; Neh. vii. 43); and only hirty-eight Levites accompanied Ezra (Ezra viii. 15–19). So in Nehemiah's time there dwelt in Jerusalem 1,192 priests, but only 204 Levites, including the singers (Neh. xi. 10–18).

In the P code the inferiority of the Levites to the Zadokite priests is a recognized principle. In this code the latter are dignified with the name Aaronites, the inferior Levites not being now regarded as priests proper at all. See Driver on Deut. xviii. 6–8 and the references there given. See also *DB.* 'Priests' (Baudissin). It has been mentioned by Graf and most later writers that in all the older sources used in Ezra-Nehemiah singers and porters are reated as classes outside the Levites, but that the Chronicler himself includes all under the general name 'Levites': see Smend, *Listen*, 26; Baudissin, *Priestertum*, 142 f., and also *Einleitung*, p. 288, where he answers Torrey; Torrey, *Composition*, &c., 22 f.

The facts of the case may be thus briefly stated.

1. It is in post-exilic writings of the Old Testament that we first read of 'singers,' 'porters,' and 'Nethinim,' as distinct classes of Temple servants.

2. In certain parts of Ezra-Nehemiah and of Chronicles it is implied that 'singers,' 'porters,' &c., stand outside the Levites, so that they are named separately; see Ezra ii. 40–42, 70, vii. 7, 24, x. 23 f.; Neh. xi. 10 ff., xiii. 5, 10 ff.; 1 Chron. ix. 10 ff. (cp. Neh. xi. 10 ff., which is almost identical), xv. 16 ff., xxiii–xxvi. Köberle and v. Hoonacker deny the above statement, maintaining that in the books named above the singers, &c., appear as Levites.

3. In other parts of Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles, the Levites seem to be a general class including in it the subordinate Temple officials named, singers, &c., as in 1 Chron. ix. 33; Ezra iii. 10; Neh. xi. 17–22, xii. 8, 24, 27; 2 Chron. v. 12, and in the genealogies in 1 Chron. vi. 16 f. Cp. Ezra ii. 41.

The porters are never formally identified with the Levites, though in 1 Chron. xxxiv. 9 we read of the 'Levites who kept the doors'; but see 2 Kings xii. 9 (cp. xxv. 18), where we read of '*priests* who kept the door.' Ezek. xliv. 11 seems to show that even non-Israelites could act as door-keepers. But in 1 Chron. ix. 26 the four chief porters are Levites, and in the genealogies the porters are clearly traced to Levitic families, as are the singers, see 1 Chron. xxvi. 1 (the porters are Korahites, i. e. Levites; cp. 2 Chron. xx. 19, &c.). The Chronicler assigns to the singers a very important part in the cultus; see 2 Chron. viii. 14 (cp. 1 Chron. xx. 16), xx. 19 ff., xxix. 25 ff.

Now in the P code there are priests and Levites and no others, the latter term having a broad sense which includes all the lower officials. Ezekiel has but two orders of Temple officials, though the Aaronites are for him Zadokites and the Levites degraded priests. It is under the influence of Ezekiel's programme and of P that in later Hebrew writings, biblical and non-biblical, the term Levite came to have the wider meaning of all Temple officials other than the priests. This is the conception assumed in the Apocrypha, in the writings of Josephus, and also in the Talmud, which last ascribes to the Levites the two functions, song and watching, in the Temple.

Ezra-Nehemiah, and especially Chronicles, are made up o elements representing different stages of religious practice and law; so that it is useless to seek for one uniform set of usages in them. Thus in parts of Chronicles we meet with the D phrase 'the priests the Levites,' see 2 Chron. v. 5, xxiii. 18, xxx. 27; and Levites are made to perform priestly acts; see 2 Chron. xxix. 34, &c

It may be added that modern Judaism follows the P code with its implied usages.

Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the children of [a]Hodaviah,
seventy and four. The singers: the children of Asaph, an 41
hundred twenty and eight. The children of the porters: 42
the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the chil-
dren of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of
Hatita, the children of Shobai, in all an hundred thirty
and nine. The Nethinim: the children of Ziha, the 43

[a] In ch. iii. 9, *Judah.* In Neh. vii. 43, *Hodevah.*

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**40.** Render, 'the Levites: the descendants of Jeshua and (also) of Kadmiel who were of the descendants of Hodaviah,' &c. That the proper names Jeshua and Kadmiel connote families rather than individuals is proved by their recurrence in Neh. x. 9 among those who sealed the covenant in the time of Nehemiah. The same remark applies to the other names.

**of the children of Hodaviah:** this clause belongs to the descendants of Kadmiel alone; these formed a branch of the descendants of Hodaviah; see on, iii. 9.

**Hodaviah:** in Neh. vii. 43 Hodevah; in Ezra iii. 9 Judah (a textual error).

**41. singers:** the earliest mention of a distinct class of singers, though, according to 1 Chron. xv. 17–24, David was the founder, see p. 11 and on iii. 10.

**the children of Asaph:** better Asaphites. We do not read of any members of the Heman and Jeduthun musical guilds. The word 'children,' lit. 'sons,' must not be understood in the Western sense. 'Son' in Semitic means having the property of, thus a 'son of wisdom' is a 'wise man'; or belonging to, thus 'sons' (children) of Asaph denotes persons of the Asaph guild. No person called 'Asaph' can be traced.

**an hundred twenty and eight:** in Neh. vii. 44 one hundred and forty-eight.

**42. The children of the porters:** read 'porters,' or better gate-keepers': see on last verse. In Neh. vii. 45 we have simply 'the porters.' See vii. 7 on porters ('door-keepers' in the R. V. of 1 Chron. xxvi. 1). See general note to verses 40–58. Cp. Ps. lxxxiv. 10. The proper names stand for classes, not ndividuals. See 1 Chron. ix. 17 and Neh. xi. 19.

43–54. *The Nethinim.* We do not read of this class of Temple servants outside the books of Ezra-Nehemiah except in 1 Chron. ix. 2. The word 'Nethinim' means 'given' or 'devoted to,' i. e. to God. Their non-Israelitish origin is suggested by their foreign names. According to Jewish tradition they are identical with the Gibeonites whom Joshua appointed to be assistants to

44 children of Hasupha, the children of Tabbaoth; the
children of Keros, the children of [a] Siaha, the children of
45 Padon; the children of Lebanah, the children of Haga-
46 bah, the children of Akkub; the children of Hagab, the
47 children of [b] Shamlai, the children of Hanan; the children
of Giddel, the children of Gahar, the children of Reaiah;
48 the children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda, the chil-
49 dren of Gazzam; the children of Uzza, the children of
50 Paseah, the children of Besai; the children of Asnah,
51 the children of Meunim, the children of [c] Nephisim; the
children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the chil-
52 dren of Harhur; the children of [d] Bazluth, the children of
53 Mehida, the children of Harsha; the children of Barkos,
54 the children of Sisera, the children of Temah; the chil-
55 dren of Neziah, the children of Hatipha. The children
of Solomon's servants: the children of Sotai, the chil-
56 dren of [e] Hassophereth, the children of [f] Peruda; the
children of Jaalah, the children of Darkon, the children
57 of Giddel; the children of Shephatiah, the children of

[a] In Neh. vii. 47, *Sia.* [b] In Neh. vii. 48, *Salmai.*

[c] Another reading is, *Nephusim.* In Neh. vii. 52, *Nephushesim.* [d] In Neh. vii. 54, *Bazlith.*

[e] In Neh. vii. 57, *Sophereth.* [f] In Neh. vii. 57, *Perida.*

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the Levites (see Joshua ix. 3-27), but Ezra viii. 20 makes David their founder. Many other theories of their origin and functions have been put forth. Has the word any connexion with Nathan the name of the well-known high-priest?

55-58. *The children of* (i.e. the people who are) *Solomon's servants*: mentioned in conjunction with the Nethinim also (as here) in Neh. vii. 60, xi. 3. They are usually regarded as descendants of the Canaanitish tribes conquered by Solomon (see 1 Kings v. 13), but really nothing certain is known of them or of the Nethinim except that they assisted the Levites. Baudissin (*Priesterthum*, 142 f.) thinks the words 'the children of Solomon's servants' is simply an explication of Nethinim, 'even the children of Solomon's servants,' but there are two distinct lists which show that distinct classes are intended.

Hattil, the children of Pochereth-hazzebaim, the children
of [a] Ami. All the Nethinim, and the children of Solo- 58
mon's servants, were three hundred ninety and two. And 59
hese were they which went up from Tel-melah, Tel-
harsha, Cherub, [b] Addan, *and* Immer: but they could not
shew their fathers' houses, and their seed, whether
hey were of Israel: the children of Delaiah, the chil- 60
dren of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred
fifty and two. And of the children of the priests: 61
he children of [c] Habaiah, the children of Hakkoz, the
children of Barzillai, which took a wife of the daughters
of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their

[a] In Neh. vii. 59, *Amon.* [b] In Neh. vii. 61, *Addon.*
[c] In Neh. vii. 63, *Hobaiah.*

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59-63. Those whose claims to be Israelites and priests were doubtful. We have here a good illustration of the exclusiveness of post-exilic Judaism. Though however these families failed to make good heir claims they were allowed to return with the rest, but their names do not occur in the lists of Ezra x. 25-43 or of Neh. x. 15-28.

59 f. *Doubtful Israelites who returned.*

**59.** The proper names in this verse stand for places in Babylon, hough whether cities, districts, &c., or where they were situated, we do not know. None of these names belong to persons, as hese last are enumerated in the next verse. Some join Cherub-Addan-Immer; thus making the number of places three, correponding to the three clans of the next verse.

**fathers' houses:** the clans or tribal subdivisions: see Neh. i. 2, 18, &c.

**their seed:** their line of descent. They could not show to what clans they belonged or that they were truly of Israel at all. See Ps. xxii. 31; Jer. xxiii. 8.

**60. Nekoda:** the same name appears among the Nethinim ver. 48). Perhaps this family sought to be enrolled among the ull Israelites.

61-63. *Doubtful priestly families.* Such as claimed the rights of he priesthood without being able to prove their priestly descent.

**61. Habaiah:** in Neh. vii. 63 'Hobaiah,' the difference being due probably to a copyist. Baer in his Hebrew text writes both alike.

**Hakkoz:** see 1 Chron. xxiv. 10.

**Barzillai:** see 2 Sam. xvii. 27, xix. 32-39; 1 Kings ii. 7.

62 name. These sought their register *among* those tha
were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found
therefore [a] were they deemed polluted and put fror
63 the priesthood. And the [b] Tirshatha said unto them

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[a] Heb. *they were polluted from the priesthood.* [b] Or, *governo*

A wealthy Gileadite not of priestly family, but a daughter c whom married a priest, retaining for her family the name for th sake of the inheritance. The descendants of such a marriag could not rightly claim the priestly office.

**62.** Render: ‘These sought for the record (lit. writings) c themselves among those enrolled in the genealogies; but it wa not found: therefore were they pronounced polluted (i. e. ceremonially unclean) (and so) excluded from the priesthood.’

**their register:** lit. ‘their writing’; the Hebrew word is technical one for the roll of Israelites, priests, &c., which ha probably been kept in the Temple archives from the ninth century B.C. onwards. See Ezek. xiii. 9.

*among* (those, &c.): not in the Hebrew, but to be restore here and in Nehemiah. It is hard, if not impossible, to make sens of the Hebrew without this preposition, and the change in th Hebrew is very slight (*b* for *h*).

**they** (were not found): read, ‘it’ (the writing) ‘was,’ &c., a in Neh. vii. 64.

**polluted:** i. e. not of pure priestly descent. There is no allusion to personal moral disqualification. Of course their exclusio from the priesthood was not necessarily final: with full proof c the soundness of their claims these doubtful priests would be reinstated; and a similar statement applies to the doubtful Israelite

**63. Tirshatha:** should be written *Tarshatha* according t the Persian original word which is a passive participle = ‘feared,’ ‘revered’; so Meyer, Siegfried, Bertholet (not a Lagarde ‘the king’s representative’). It is not an offici title, but an epithet of respect (cf. ‘your excellence’) applie to noblemen and high officials. Here, and in Neh. vii. 65, 7 it is applied to Sheshbazzar, but in Neh. viii. 9 and x. wrongly to Nehemiah, who is called *pekhah* (= governor) i Neh. xii. 26. It used to be thought that *tirshatha* has in Persia the same technical sense that *pekhah* (governor) has in Babylonia but no Persian scholar has ever said or thought this. Th Nehemiah is not the person here meant is proved by the fa that he himself found the list in which the person thus designate is mentioned; and besides, the power exercised by the *tirshath* here as regards the priesthood corresponds to the authority give to Sheshbazzar (see i. 8).

hat they should not eat of the most holy things, till there
tood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim. The 64

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**that they should not eat,** &c.: that they should not act as riests; to these last alone was it permitted to partake of the hew-bread and of certain parts of what was offered: see Lev. . 10, vi. 18, 26, vii. 6, 31–34.

**the most holy things:** what priests alone were allowed to at. See Num. xviii. 9–11.

**till there stood up,** &c.: these priestly claimants of oubtful genealogy were to refrain from acting as priests until nother high-priest should arise with power to obtain oracles rom God by Urim and Thummim: he would be able to decide s to the validity or otherwise of the claims put forth by these men.

**Urim and Thummim:** an ancient Hebrew method of eeking by lot the will of God, employed by the high-priest lone. The following rendering of 1 Sam. xiv. 41 f., based on text amended in accordance with *Luc.*, makes it exceedingly kely that *Urim* and *Thummim* stand for two stones on which lternative answers were written (yes, no, &c.), and which, eing placed in a pocket attached to the high-priest's ephod, ne of them was drawn, the word on it constituting the answer ought: 'And Saul said, O Yahweh the God of Israel, why hast hou not answered thy servant, this day? If the iniquity be in e or in Jonathan my son give Urim; and if thou sayest thus: he iniquity is in the people, give Thummim' (Driver, *in loco*). Ve have ten other obvious examples in the O. T. in which God vas consulted by lot: see Jonah i. 7 ff., &c. Many other explanaions of *Urim* and *Thummim* have been given. Josephus (*Antiq.* i. 8. 9) and the Rabbis generally identified *Urim* and *Thummim* vith the twelve precious stones, which, according to P (Exod. xviii. 17 ff.), were inserted in the high-priest's breastplate and vhich in some mysterious way indicated the Divine Will: so alisch (see on Exod. xxviii. 30). But *Urim* and *Thummim* had o be put into the pocket of the breastplate, and the names uggest two not twelve stones. Spencer, Hengstenberg, and thers, derive the custom of divining by two stones from Egyptian odels. Some (J. H. Michaelis, Gesenius, &c.) have held that three tones were used, one for an affirmative, another for a negative, nd a third for a neutral answer; but the evidence is against this.

The Rabbis say that in the second Temple five things were cking which were present in Solomon's Temple, viz. the Ark, e Holy Fire, the Oil of Anointing, the Shechinah, the Spirit f Prophecy, and the Urim and Thummim. It is, however, nplied in Josephus, *Antiq.* iii. 8. 9, and Sir. xxxvi. 3 (EV. xxxiii. ) that the high-priest had the power of Urim and Thummim own to Maccabean days. If Joshua were now high-priest why

whole congregation together was forty and two thousand
65 three hundred and threescore, beside their menservants
and their maidservants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and they had two

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had he not this power? Probably he had not yet entered fully into office; and, in any case, it was believed immediately after the return that no one could receive Divine intimations in this manner.

'Urim' (LXX 'revelation,' Vulg. 'teaching') means 'lights' (so Sym., Theod.) or 'great light,' plur. of intensity: 'Thummim' (LXX 'truth') means 'perfections' or 'great perfection,' plur. of intensity. The sense of the words has, however, been variously explained.

**64-67.** Sum total of the people and of the animals. On the apparent contradiction between the details and the sum total of those who returned, see p. 52. Several futile attempts at reconciliation have been made, such as that the total includes members of the ten tribes who returned with the others. But either we have here three distinct traditions with editorial harmonizing in the sum total, or divergences in the items—a more likely explanation. The existence of three different traditions would be a confirmation of the general facts, though it would be an argument against the idea that contemporary written archives were preserved.

**64.** According to 1 Esd. v. 41 the total given includes those above twelve years old only, from which J. D. Michaelis, following Jewish commentators, infers that the separate statements refer to those above twenty years of age; he thus accounts for the divergences in the detailed numbers and the sum total. But even then he fails to account for the divergences in the details, though they are slight. Others have thought that the sum total includes the women, but that the items do not. So Stade and Meyer.

**congregation**: the Hebrew word (*qahal*) has a religious connotation, and is especially used of the restored community. The Jews left Palestine a nation; they returned a religious community. In later times the word stood for the pious portion of the people, see Ps. cxlix. 1. Stade, with a view to confirming his contention that Yahwism was essentially a men's religion, says that the *qahal Yahweh* or 'Yahweh's congregation' was made up of men alone, but that he is wrong is proved by Neh. viii. 2; Joshua viii. 35; cp. Deut. xxxi. 12; Ezra x. 1; Joel ii. 16.

**65. they** (had), i.e. the whole congregation of ver. 64.

**two hundred**: in Neh. vii. 67 and 1 Esd. v. 42 two hundred and forty-five, a copyist's error due to the presence of the latter number in the following verse.

undred singing men and singing women. Their 66
orses were seven hundred thirty and six; their
ules, two hundred forty and five; their camels, four 67
undred thirty and five; *their* asses, six thousand seven
undred and twenty. And some of the heads of fathers' 68

**singing men and singing women:** to be distinguished from he Levitical guild of sacred singers mentioned in verses 41, 70. he singers of this verse are professionals, such as were employed or marriages, feasts, banquets, and the like; see 2 Sam. xix. 36; Chron. xxxv. 25; Sir. ii. 7 f.; here they were engaged to elieve the tedium of the journey. The mention of them is a onfirmation of the truth of the story of the return. The text has een unnecessarily changed so as to read 'oxen,' omitting 'and inging women' as an addition due to the corruption[1] of the preeding word. There is no external authority for this, and we ave abundant attestation of the existence of the singers of erses 41, 70, and of these of the present verse. Löhr[2] holds hat this verse proves that immediately after the exile, and proably before it, women formed an essential part of the Temple choir.

**66.** Number of the beasts: horses 736 (1 Esd. v. 43, 7,036); ules 245; camels 435; asses 6,720; so Neh. vii. 68.
The animals mentioned are only such as would be required for he journey for carrying persons and baggage, an undesigned onfirmation of the narrative.

**horses:** the earliest mention of the use of the horse among he Israelites for purposes other than war.

**mules:** used in Palestine at present almost exclusively for arrying baggage, but in Bible times they were used by the etter-to-do for riding purposes before the horse was so used: ee 1 Kings i. 33, 38, 44; Isa. lxvi. 30. They were unknown in alestine until Solomon imported them.

**67. camels** would be most valuable for the journey from Babyon on account of their ability to carry great burdens and to ndure beyond most animals.

**asses** would be used by the poorer classes; much less used n Palestine than the horse at the present time, though in Egypt he contrary is the case. The Egyptian deserts suit the ass as the ocky mountains do the horse.

68 f. *Contributions of heads of houses towards the rebuilding of e Temple.* The parallel account in Neh. vii. 70–72 is fuller, but the um totals of what was given do not agree in Ezra and Nehemiah.

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[1] *A. T. Theol.* i. 147 ff.

[2] *Das Weib in Jahwe-Religion und Jahwe-Kult*, 51.

*houses*, when they came to the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem, offered willingly for the house of God to
69 set it up in its place: they gave after their ability into the treasury of the work threescore and one thousand darics

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In the former the heads of houses give 61,000 darics of gold, 5,000 pounds of silver, and 100 priests' garments. In Nehemiah the Tirshatha, heads of houses, and the remainder of the people give in all 41,000 darics of gold, 4,700 pounds of silver, and 97 priests' garments. It is impossible to reconcile these numbers. The discrepancies are due to different traditions or to copyists' errors.

**68. heads of fathers' houses:** see on i. 5.

**for the house of God . . . place:** Neh. vii. 70 simply '(gave) unto the work,' the last word standing, according to Wellhausen and Bertholet, for the cultus (sacrificing, &c.) only. This, it is held, is what is meant in the present verse, and the text is accordingly changed so as to make it agree with Nehemiah. But that the word rendered 'work' can denote temple building is proved by iii. 9, Hag. i. 14, &c. Perhaps, however, the contributions here were specifically towards restoring the cultus or worship of the house. See on vi. 4 **to set it up,** Heb. 'to make stand,' i. e. 'to restore,' as in ix. 9.

**69.** Here the heads of houses give; in Nehemiah the Tirshatha and the rest of the people give as well, though even then the amount reached is smaller than what the 'heads' alone give.

**darics:** a Persian gold coin of the value of our guinea, deriving its name, according to Bohlenius, Ryssel (Bertheau), &c., from the Persian *dara* (king), and *kama* (bow), so meaning 'king's bow,' a king with a bow being pictured on the coin: see Gesenius, *Thesaurus*, $354^{a}$; Madden, *Coins of the Jews* (2), p. 48. Modern scholars, however, tend more and more to reject the Persian etymology. As a matter of fact the Babylonian word[1] was used long before the Persians came in contact with the Babylonians. But in any case the derivation from 'Darius' is now universally rejected by scholars. This word seems to be quite distinct in etymology from the word rendered 'daric' in viii. 27 and 1 Chron. xxix. 7, the latter being a Hebraized form of the word in the present verse, from the Heb. root *darak*, 'to bend the bow'; then *darkon* (the Heb. noun) = 'archer.' But it is the same coin that is probably meant, though Meyer thinks we must understand different coins, finding support in the bilingual inscription (Phoenician and Greek) found in the Pyraeus: see *Entstehung*, &c., 196 f.

If the two words rendered 'darics' (*darkemon* and *darkon*) are of gold, and five thousand [a] pound of silver, and one hundred priests' garments. So the priests, and the 70 Levites, and some of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinim, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

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[1] *dariku*, used according to Prof. Sayce in the Neo-Babylonian contracts for a kind of measure. The cuneiform lexical tablets make *dariku* = 'a pot.'

[b] And when the seventh month was come, and the 3 children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered

[a] Heb. *maneh*. [b] See Neh. vii. 73, viii. 1.

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derived from Darius there arises a chronological difficulty : how could coins used in the time of Cyrus (538–529) be called after Darius (D. Hystaspis, 521–486)? That the older name is used here and the later Hebraized name by Ezra himself (viii. 27) is evidence for the antiquity and authenticity of the list in this chapter.

**pound :** Heb. *maneh*, Greek *mina*, Bab. *manu*, Sumerian *mana* : a certain value of silver measured by weight, containing fifty shekels, equal to one-sixtieth part of a talent, i.e. about £6 16*s*.

**priests' garments :** made of fine white linen ; see description in Exod. xxviii. 40, xxxix. 27, and cf. 2 Chron. v. 12.

70. *Closing words.* Read and render, 'And then the priests, the Levites, the singers, the porters, the Nethinim, and some of the people (not being Levites)—even all Israel dwelt in their cities.' See Neh. vii. 73. 1 Esd. v. 46 says that the priests, Levites, and lay folk dwelt in and about Jerusalem, but the holy singers, porters, and all Israel dwelt in their villages.

III (1 Esd. v. 47-65). RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE NATION RESUMED : BUILDING AND DEDICATION OF THE ALTAR (1-6) ; FOUNDATION OF THE TEMPLE LAID (7-10).

1-3. *Building of the altar and sacrificing on it.*

**1.** See on Neh. vii. 73 f.

**seventh month :** i. e. of the first year of Cyrus, referring back to i. 1 ('the first year of Cyrus') : see ver. 8. This month, called Tishri, is still the sacred month of the Jewish calendar, for in it occur the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement (10th day), and Tabernacles (15th to 21st), and in later as in pre-exilic times the year began with it : see on x. 16. Howorth, following 1 Esd. v. 6, holds that it is the seventh month of the second year of Darius II (Nothus, 423-404) that is meant (*PSBA*. 1902, p. 336) ; but this chronology is impossible (see p. 28), and it rests on a legend which is full of improbabilities (1 Esd. iii. 1–v. 6).

**in the cities :** see ii. 70. The returned exiles were now settled in their respective homes.

2 themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. Then
stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren
the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his
brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to
offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of
3 Moses the man of God. And they set the altar [a] upon its
base; for fear was upon them because of the people of

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[a] Or, *in its place*

**to Jerusalem:** 1 Esd. v. 47 more definitely, 'into the broad place before the first gate which is towards the east': see Neh. viii. 1[a]. The assembly took place in the open space between the water-gate (Neh. iii. 26) and the temple area.

**2. Jeshua:** see on ii. 2.

**his brethren:** Jeshua's brethren are his fellow members of the priesthood; Zerubbabel's are the heads of houses (ii. 2, 68).

**builded:** in the sense of 'rebuilded' as in 1 Kings xvi. 34, Amos ix. 14.

**the altar:** as the materials of the old altar were probably to hand, and so many workers were engaged, the altar would be speedily completed. As it was of the utmost importance that the religious life of the nation should be resumed, the altar was set up before the Temple was rebuilt.

**burnt offerings:** such as were offered daily on behalf of the nation. Private offerings, being of less importance, had to wait.

**as it is written,** &c.: see Lev. i; Neh. x. 35-37; 2 Chron. xxiii. 18, xxxv. 12, where the same expression occurs. All sacrificial regulations are ascribed in post-exilic writings to Moses, musical arrangements to David: see ver. 10, and Proverbs to Solomon (Prov. i. 1).

**law of Moses:** not the Pentateuch. The Hebrew word here (*torah*) is never once used in the O.T. in the strictly technica sense 'Pentateuch' which prevails in Rabbinical Hebrew. It means strictly 'teaching,' then 'prescribed laws' (see p. 8, n.). The 'law of Moses' in Ezra, Neh., &c. = the regulations about worship in the current code, believed to owe its origin to Moses: see on vii. 6

**3. its base:** the same words (with a very slight difference) in ii. 68 are rendered 'its place': see Zech. v. 11. The meaning is that the altar was set up in the place where the former altar stood The spirit animating the people would lead them to preserve old sites as well as old usages. The Massorites ($q^e r\bar{e}$) change unnecessarily into the plural 'its bases.'

**for fear,** &c.: render 'for fear of the peoples of the land came upon them; and so (to secure Divine protection) they the countries: and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, even burnt offerings morning and evening. And they kept the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, 4

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offered,' &c. A very slight change in the **M. T.** (adopted by Bertholet and Kittel) is required for the above translation. Without some change the Hebrew gives no good sense.

**people of the countries:** Hebrew 'peoples of the lands' (or 'countries'). We should, however, read 'the peoples of the land,' the plural of the second noun being due to attraction to that of the first. It is possible, of course, that there is in the Hebrew a reference to the various nationalities of contiguous countries (Edom, &c.). Ewald was of opinion that during the exile the Edomites had to a large extent taken possession of South Palestine, but that is an unproved guess. The phrase 'peoples (people) of the land' or 'of the earth' or 'of the lands' seems always to stand for the heathen in contrast with Israel, 'the people.' Its primary reference is probably to the native races of Palestine; but as they were heathen the expression came to stand for heathen in general, an extension of meaning made easier by the fact that the same Hebrew word means 'land' or 'country' and also 'earth.' The sing. 'people' (*'am*) refers nearly always to Israel. See article 'Nation' in Hastings' *SDB.* for use of 'nations' in sense of 'heathen.' Cf. iv. 4 ('people of the land,' see on), ix. 1, &c.; and also Deut. xxviii. 10; Joshua iv. 24; 1 Kings viii. 53, 60.

**burnt offerings,** &c.: the regulations for the daily sacrifices are given in Exod. xxix. 38-42 (P); Num. xxviii. 3-8 (P).

4-7. Before the Temple was built and regular worship resumed the Israelites celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles and other feasts, offering the appropriate sacrifices on the newly restored altar.

**4. they kept the feast of tabernacles:** this is apparently at variance with the statement in Neh. viii. 17 that between the time of the observance recorded in Neh. viii. 14 ff. and that of Joshua son of Nun this feast had not been kept; see on the above passage. Even if we assume that this feast was observed on both these occasions it is strange that nowhere else in Ezra-Nehemiah and nowhere at all in the other historical books of the O. T. do we read of the actual carrying out of the laws commanding the feast (see on, Neh. viii. 14). The authenticity of the present passage is denied by making it an invention of the Chronicler, who had a wish to represent the returned Jews as faithful to 'the law of Moses.' See p. 14 f.

Originally the three great feasts were agricultural, and had nothing to do with the events with which in later times they came to be connected; they were simply agrarian feasts during which the people rejoiced at the close of the three harvests (barley,

and *offered* the daily burnt offerings by number, according
5 to the ordinance, as the duty of every day required; and
afterward the continual burnt offering, and *the offerings* of

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wheat, and fruit of various kind). The Feast of Tabernacles was an autumnal holiday when the people gathered from villages and towns to great centres, and living in booths enjoyed themselves when the year's hardest work was over. This feast came to be religious, commemorative of the dwelling in tents in the wilderness, only with the inauguration of the Deuteronomical legislation which, as a part of its centralization of worship, made it obligatory to keep the feasts at Jerusalem.

**as it is written:** see on ver. 2. The reference seems to be to the law recorded in Num. xxix. 12-34 (P), according to which the number of bullocks to be sacrificed on the succeeding days diminished, beginning with thirteen on the 15th of Tishri and ending with seven on the 21st and closing day of the feast. But the various codes do not agree. See G. B. Gray, *Numbers*, p. 402 ff. ('a scale of public offerings'). No details of the manner in which the feast was kept are given in the present chapter.

***offered*:** the verb translated 'kept' is the technical one for 'to offer' (a sacrifice); its force is continued in the present clause and also into the next verse, so that the italics are not needed and should be omitted.

**by number,** &c.: see the above note.

5-7. *The offering of sacrifices of various kinds resumed.*

**5. afterward:** after the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles the sacrificial system suspended since the destruction of the Temple in 586 B.C. was restored. The nation so long religiously dead was beginning to re-live its old religious life.

**the continual burnt offering:** the daily sacrifices, see Exod. xxix. 38-42; Num. xxviii. 8; Ezek. xlvi. 15. In pre-exilic times the daily sacrifice consisted of a whole burnt offering in the morning and a meal offering in the evening (see 2 Kings xvi. 15; cf. 1 Kings xviii. 29, 36). Ezekiel requires both these in the morning; Neh. x. 33 (34) assumes that both were offered each day, though whether in the morning as Ezek. xlvi. 15, or morning and evening according to the old law, cannot be determined. In later times (see Num. xxviii. 8 (P)) the law required a burnt offering and also a meal offering both morning and evening, though the meal offering was subordinated to the other, as was the drink offering which (last) was never offered alone. See on ix. 5 and on Neh. x. 34 (33).

**continual** means in this connexion 'daily.'

**and the offerings of:** since the construction in Hebrew implies the presence of these words the italics are unnecessary.

the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the LORD
that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly
offered a freewill offering unto the LORD. From the first 6
day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD: but the foundation of the temple of
the LORD was not yet laid. They gave money also unto 7

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**new moons:** the observance of this feast (the first day of the month) is not enacted in any of the older codes (JE, D, H) and in P only in Num. x. 19 and xxviii. 11-15. It does not even find mention in the list of feasts in Lev. xxiii. Nevertheless, that the new moon was in early times observed as a festal day and as a day of sacrifice is proved by Amos viii. 5; Hos. ii. 11 (13); Isa. i. 13; 1 Sam. xx. 4 ff.; 2 Kings iv. 23.

In 1 Esd. v. 52 the Sabbath offerings are mentioned before those of the new moons: so 1 Chron. xxiii. 31; 2 Chron. ii. 4.

**set feasts:** probably here as in Neh. x. 33, 2 Chron. viii. 13 the three great annual pilgrimage feasts are meant, though the expression has a wider sense in Lev. xxiii. 2 (see following verses where they are enumerated).

**freewill offering:** the aforementioned offerings were made by the community and were compulsory. But each individual was at liberty to make private offerings on the great feast days (see Deut. xvi. 10, 16 f.) or on any other occasions (see Num. xxix. 39). See Lev. i-iii, where they are called 'gifts' ('corbans,' see Mark vii. 11), a word however which in other places includes all kinds of sacrifices, bloody and bloodless.

**6.** Sacrifice began to be offered immediately the altar was set up, i.e. on the first day of Tishri, the Day of Trumpets (Num. xxix. 1). Yet the regular daily offering was not resumed until the Feast of Tabernacles had been held, i.e. after the 22nd day of the month, three weeks later: see ver. 5.

**7.** *Preparations for the rebuilding of the Temple.* See the much fuller account of the preparations for building Solomon's temple in 1 Kings v. 7 ff. (Heb. 21 ff.) and 2 Chron. ii. 11 ff. Some say that the present verse is an invention of the Chronicler's, based on the older accounts of the building of the first Temple. But there are differences as well as resemblances; and it should be remembered that the example of Solomon was likely to influence the conduct of Zerubbabel and Jeshua.

**money:** the native workmen received money; the Sidonians and Tyrians were paid in kind (wheat, wine, and oil); see 1 Kings v. 23.

the [a] masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea, unto Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

8 Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of

[a] Or, *hewers*

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**masons:** rather 'stone-cutters,' i. e. those who cut the stones into proper shape for building: not builders or 'masons.' Nor does the word stand for those who quarried the stone (from below the city).

**carpenters:** i. e. those who cut the wood into the shape required for the building; so the Hebrew.

**grant:** the Hebrew word seems to mean 'permission,' the reference being to the permission given by Cyrus to rebuild the Temple and his promise of help.

8–13. *Foundation of the Temple laid.* Though the work of rebuilding was commenced in real earnest, it seems to have been speedily stopped, not being resumed until the second year of Darius Hystaspis, i. e. in 519 B. C.: see v. 2. Even the foundation-stone was so incompletely laid that the whole proceeding had to be gone through sixteen years later when the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah moved the people to set about the task of rebuilding: see Hag. i. 15. There is no need to assume that there is a contradiction. The first foundation-stone laying was formal and incomplete; at the end of sixteen years those hostile to the undertaking might have undone what had been done. Besides, the Hebrew verb (ver. 10) translated 'to lay the foundation' must not be understood to mean to start a new building *de novo.* To begin rebuilding an old structure would meet the requirements of the case.

**8. the second year:** i. e. after the return; this would be probably the third year of Cyrus's reign over Babylon.

**the house of God,** &c. (see ii. 68): i. e. the place where the Temple had been, was to be, and where much of the old building must have remained.

**second month:** i. e. Iyyar.

**began:** i. e. the work of rebuilding the Temple; what they began to do is suggested by the context. Some (Keil, &c.) join the verb to **and appointed,** rendering 'began to appoint'; the Hebrew allows this.

**Zerubbabel,** &c.: see on ii. 2 and also on v. 2. The community which appointed the Levites as overseers of the work

Jozadak, and the rest of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to [a] have the oversight of the work of the house of the LORD. Then stood Jeshua 9

[a] Or, *set forward the work*

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consisted of the civic (Zerubbabel) and religious (Jeshua) leaders, priests, and Levites, and the rest, i. e. the lay portion.

**Jeshua:** see on ii. 2.

**the rest:** i. e. all except Zerubbabel and Jeshua.

**and appointed:** render 'so they appointed.' The verb (lit. to 'cause to stand') is used elsewhere also of appointing to office, as in 2 Chron. viii. 14, xxxi. 2, &c.: see on verses 9, 10.

**the Levites:** very few of them returned according to ii. 40. They would therefore not be too numerous to act as superintendents of the various departments of the work.

**from twenty years old and upward:** service agreeing with 1 Chron. xxiii. 27, which refers this arrangement to the time of David, though it is probably what obtained in the writer's own day. Num. iv. 3 (P) gives the years of service as from thirty to fifty, though after that a Levite could help his brethren. Num. viii. 23-26 (P) fixes the age at from twenty-five to fifty. The different figures represent the customs of different times. There is no contradiction between the present verse and Num. iv. 3.

**to have the oversight of:** not in the LXX (except *Luc.*) which has simply 'appointed . . . over the work,' &c. The verb translated as above is cognate with the word often found in the titles of Psalms (R. V. Chief Musician). These Levites must be understood as having the oversight only as regards the religious use of the structure—sacrifice, the laws of holiness, &c. They can hardly have had the ability or responsibility of seeing to the building, carpentering, &c., as such.

**9.** What the writer in this verse aims at saying is that the Levites accepted the task imposed on them; but as it stands the verse does not say that, or indeed anything that is intelligible in the light of the text. Probably the Hebrew should be altered slightly and then translated as follows:

'Then Jeshua and his descendants and brethren, Kadmiel and his descendants (who were) descendants of Hodaviah, their descendants and their brethren, (yea, all the) Levites, accepted the appointment, superintending the workmen (lit. 'the doers of the work') at the house of God.'

**stood:** the intransitive form of the verb translated **appointed** in ver. 8: it means that the Levites performed the duties to which they were appointed.

with his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the
sons of [a] Judah, [b] together, to have the oversight of the
workmen in the house of God: the sons of Henadad,
o with their sons and their brethren the Levites. And
when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of
the LORD, [c] they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets,
and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to

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[a] In ch. ii. 40, *Hodaviah*. [b] Heb. *as one*.

[c] According to some MSS. and ancient versions, *the priests stood*.

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**Jeshua . . . his brethren:** i.e. Levitical families connected by blood relationship with that of Jeshua (Joshua) and called by that name, though not claiming descent from one ancestor, Jeshua.

**Judah:** read (with most moderns) 'Hodaviah': see ii. 40. The Hebrew words could be easily confounded, especially as the first consonant of Judah is identical with the last of the preceding word. But Neh. xii. 8 shows that there was a Levitical clan Judah.

**Henadad:** this name is here probably due to a marginal gloss. First an editor would substitute in the margin 'Hodaviah' for 'Judah.' This found its way into the text alongside of Judah. A later editor, thinking of Neh. x. 9, substituted Henadad. We have really in this verse but two Levitical clans, those enumerated in ii. 40.

**their sons and their brethren:** i.e. the descendants and brethren of Kadmiel and Hodaviah the Levites. Render, '(even all) the Levites': this sums up the preceding.

**10.** Note that in this verse Levites seem to act as musicians; in the oldest sources of Ezra-Nehemiah the latter are a clan apart. See pp. 16, 61 f., and on Neh. xi. 17.

**builders:** i.e. the workmen.

**they set:** if we retain the M. T. we must take the construction to be what is called that of the indefinite subject, which is generally best Englished by the passive 'were set,' &c. But it is far better to follow the LXX (including *Luc.*), Vulg. Syr., 1 Esd. v. 59, and at least thirteen Hebrew MSS., and to read the intransitive form of the verb, changing vowels only which were originally not written: so 'they stood' in the sense 'stepped forward' as in Ps. cvi. 23, Neh. xii. 40, and Ezek. xxii. 30. The priests came forward to perform their duties clothed in their robes of office, and with trumpets.

**trumpets:** blown by priests alone: see Num. x. 8 f. and 1 Chron. xiii. 8; cf. Neh. xii. 35, 41.

**cymbals:** played on by Levites; see Neh. xii. 27; 2 Chron. v. 12 ff.

praise the Lord, after the order of David king of Israel.
And they sang one to another in praising and giving 11
thanks unto the Lord, *saying*, For he is good, for his
mercy *endureth* for ever toward Israel. And all the
people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the
Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord
was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and heads 12
of fathers' *houses*, the old men that had seen [a] the first
house, when the foundation of this house was laid before

[a] Or, *the first house* standing *on its foundation, when this house was before their eyes*

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**David:** see on ver. 2. In post-exilic times David was credited with having originated the musical arrangements of the Temple: see 1 Chron. xxv. 1 ff. and 1 Esd. i. 5, and cf. p. 11.

**11. And they sang one to another:** Jewish music lacked harmony and counterpoint, but in some degree it made up by a large measure of antiphonal singing, one portion of the choir singing one part of a verse, the other singing the remainder: see Ps. cxxxvi in which each verse has two sections. See *Psalms*, vol. ii. in this series, p. 26, and the references there given. The Hebrew word here rendered 'sang' means 'answered,' and it is so translated in x. 12; Neh. viii. 6.

**praising:** the Hebrew word is that in *hallelu-yah*, 'praise ye Yah' (= Yahweh): for its etymology see W. R. Smith (*Rel. Sem.*$^{(2)}$, 431 f.).

**giving thanks:** the Hebrew word denotes primarily stretching forth the hands, as an attitude of worship. See on x. 1 for other senses of the verb.

**for his mercy,** &c., quoting the words of the refrain: see 1 Chron. xvi. 4; 2 Chron. v. 13, vii. 3, xx. 21; Jer. xxxiii. 11; Ps. cxxxvi. Many think the latter was sung on the present occasion, but there is no proof of that.

**mercy:** render 'lovingkindness.'

**12. the old men:** the word rendered 'elders' in v. 5 and elsewhere, but here having its literal not its official signification.

From 586, when the Temple was destroyed, to the present year 536, there is but a space of half a century, so that many who witnessed the present events must have had vivid remembrances of the appearance of the old Temple.

**when the foundation of this house,** &c.: this clause must be joined to what follows and not (as the Hebrew accents require) with what precedes, though the Hebrew is peculiar and even inaccurate.

their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted
13 aloud for joy: so that the people could not discern the
noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping
of the people: for the people shouted with a loud
shout, and the noise was heard afar off.

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**wept,** as they saw the contrast between what of the new Temple was before their eyes and the complete Solomonian Temple as memory recalled it.

**shouted aloud for joy:** not only did the young and middle-aged rejoice that they were to have a Temple like that of which their fathers had spoken and sung, but many of the old men, even those who wept, must have shared the gladness of the occasion.

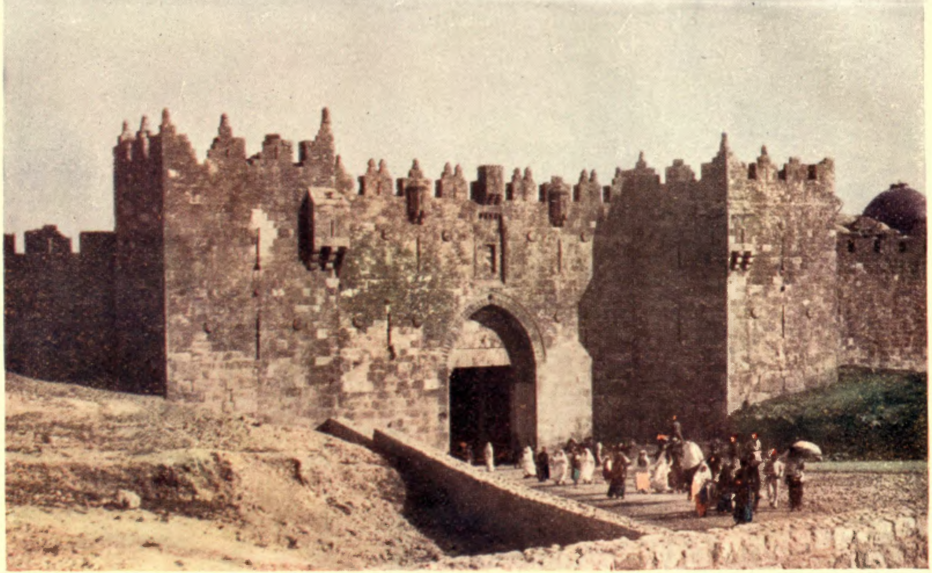
## IV. (1 Esd. v. 66-73).

### 1-5. Jewish Refusal of the Samaritan Offer of Co-operation in the Building of the Temple.

It has become quite the fashion to treat this section as the fabrication of the Chronicler, who wished to make his fellow countrymen appear as religious as he could from the time of their reaching Jerusalem, and also to account for the hostility between Jews and Samaritans. Even E. Meyer, a defender of the general authenticity of Ezra-Nehemiah, falls in with the prevailing fashion when writing on these verses (see *Entstehung*, 119 ff.). Yet the grounds on which the authenticity of this section has been denied are almost wholly *a priori* and subjective, and admit of being satisfactorily met.

It has been asked, How could Cyrus, who authorized the return and also the rebuilding of the Temple (see ver. 3), now consent to have the work hindered? In reply it may be said that Cyrus might have been wholly ignorant of what action his subordinates had taken, for we know that about this time he had much on his hands, in the way of protecting lands he had conquered and in the administration of his vast dominions. Moreover, there might well have been reasons for a policy different from that pursued when the Temple-builders were yet in Babylon.

In Hag. i. 6-11 the delay in the work of Temple rebuilding is ascribed to the indifference or unbelief of the people, but here to the opposition of the Samaritans: both causes, it is said, could not be at work; but why? It is not said in ver. 4 f. that through the action of the Samaritans the work was *stopped*, but only that its progress was *checked*. We are told in iv. 24 that the work ceased, but we are not informed as to *all* the causes of that. When the exiles returned they had much to do in the way of



JERUSALEM : DAMASCUS GATE

building and rebuilding houses, dividing and cultivating the land, organizing the community and the like. The building of the Temple was not the only task that devolved upon them.

On Schrader's rejection and subsequent acceptance of the statement regarding Esar-haddon in ver. 2 see on that verse. Meyer *Entstehung*, 124 ff. ; cf. *Geschichte*, iii. 192), though a defender of parts of Ezra-Neh. which are now regarded by many scholars as unhistorical (the Aramaic documents, &c.), is very decidedly of opinion hat these five verses are an invention of the Chronicler and unhistorical. He thinks it extremely unlikely that the Samaritans, at his time the more numerous and important party, should seek religious alliance with the Jews, and still more unlikely that the Jews should have refused so flattering an offer. On the contrary, a careful consideration of all the facts will make very likely what Meyer declares to be unlikely. Why should not the Samaritans ask to be allowed to join the Jews in the great task of restoring the Temple? These Samaritans were all of them Yahweh worshippers, though their Yahweh worship was disfigured by some heathen accompaniments (e. g. representing Yahweh in the shape of their ancestral deities : 2 Kings xvii. 29) ; Josiah (d. 609) had suppressed the high places in Samaria as well as those in Judaea (2 Kings xxiii. 15 ff.), and compelled the Samaritans to contribute towards the upkeep of the Jerusalem Temple (2 Kings xxiii. 9). It may be gathered from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9 and Jer. xli. 3 ff. that at least some Samaritans worshipped at the Jerusalem Temple, and these were genuine Samaritans, not renegade Jews. In matters of religion the Samaritans had come to regard the Jews as their superiors, and it is to this that we are to ascribe the fact that at a later time the Samaritans took over the Jewish law-book (the Pentateuch), making it their own religious code.

On the other hand, Meyer infers from Isa. lvi. 1-8 that the Jews of this time were broad-minded, ready to welcome into their community eunuchs and foreigners. But most moderns (Duhm, Cheyne, &c.) think that this declaration belongs to the age of Ezra and Nehemiah, when the Jewish community was admittedly exclusive. No scholar dates this utterance in the period immediately after the return, though many (e. g. Marti) ascribe it to the time just before the exiles left Babylon. Moreover, Meyer has forgotten that Ezekiel's Jewish code (Ezek. xl–xlviii), which he admits to be a very narrow one (*Geschichte*, iii. 182), was drafted during the exile and formed the standard of the post-exilic religious life of the Jews. Besides, if, as Meyer holds (*Entstehung*, 239), Ezra hated the Samaritans on account of their idolatry so much as to wish to keep them out of Jerusalem, why should not Zerubbabel, acting in a similar spirit, refuse co-operation with the Samaritans now?

It would be equally easy to answer the statement of Marquart (*Fundamenta*, 55, 57) that the Chronicler invented the statements

4 Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjami heard that the children of the captivity builded a templ
2 unto the LORD, the God of Israel; then they drew nea to Zerubbabel, and to the heads of fathers' *houses*, an said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek you God, as ye do; [a] and we do sacrifice unto him since th days of Esar-haddon king of Assyria, which brought u

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[a] Another reading is, *yet we do no sacrifice since &c.*

in Ezra iv. 1–5 for the purpose of justifying Nehemiah's violen treatment of the Samaritans. See an able reply by Jampel *Wiederherstellung*, 77 ff.

**1. adversaries:** the Samaritans, who inherited the envy an ill-will of the Israelites towards the Jews. They do not accuratel describe themselves when (see ver. 2) they speak of themselve as having been brought from Assyria, for though that is true o the rulers of the Samaritan population after the fall of th Northern Kingdom, yet the bulk of the people were Israelites An inscription of Sargon's says that only 27,000 Samaritans wer removed; over 200,000 Jews were deported into Babylon.

**Judah and Benjamin:** the later designation for the olde 'Judah': see on i. 5.

**children of the captivity:** lit. 'sons of,' &c.; so vi. 16, &c. Th words 'son of' denote in Semitic one having the quality annexed a 'son of wisdom'='a wise man'; 'sons of the captivity ='captives.' Here of course the expression means 'those wh had been captives.' See on ii. 1, where the abstract 'captivity ='captives,' according to a common usage in Hebrew.

**builded:** Heb. 'were building.'

**2. to Zerubbabel:** add 'and to Jeshua' with *Luc.*, 1 Esd. v 68. Cf. ver. 3.

**seek:** the Hebrew word is used of consulting Yahweh wit a view to receiving an oracle: see 1 Chron. x. 14, &c. The word came to be used then of worshipping and acknow-ledging as God. Here the tense denotes what is customary 'We are in the habit of seeking,' &c., i.e. 'We are Yahwe worshippers as much as ye are.'

**we do sacrifice unto him:** the M.T. has 'not' for 'unt him'; but these two Hebrew words, because pronounced alike are often confounded through copying from dictation: see Exod xxi. 8, &c. The Hebrew text means 'we do not sacrifice (unt idols),' but the verb rendered sacrifice has never by itself th sense 'to sacrifice to idols.' The versions, including 1 Esdras hav 'unto him' as the E.VV.

p hither. But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of 3
e heads of fathers' *houses* of Israel, said unto them, Ye
ave nothing to do with us to build an house unto our
od; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD,
e God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath
ommanded us. Then the people of the land weakened 4
e hands of the people of Judah, and [a] troubled them in
uilding, and hired counsellors against them, to frustrate 5
eir purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even
ntil the reign of Darius king of Persia. [**R**] And in the 6

[a] Or, *terrified*

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**Esar-haddon:** we are nowhere else in the Old Testament old that this Assyrian king populated Samaria with the inhabiants from other rebellious parts (Assyria), though we are told quite efinitely in the inscriptions that he populated other conquered ountries and districts in this way. There does not seem the ightest reason for reading Sargon or Ashurbanipal here (see *OT*. ii. 61, where Schrader defends the genuineness of the ame here after denying it in an earlier writing). We read of other eportations in 2 Kings xvii. 24 ff. (by Sargon), and in Ezra iv. 10 Osnappar = Ashurbanipal).

**3. as king Cyrus,** &c.: see i. 3. Cyrus's decree had eference to the Jews in exile, and to no others.

**4. the people of the land:** i. e. the adversaries of ver. 1 (see n iii. 3). In post-biblical Hebrew the phrase means the 'common eople,' 'the uneducated' in particular. There may be here a touch f irony—'these ignorant Samaritans': see iii. 3 and ix. 1; cf. ohn vii. 49.

**weakened the hands:** lit. 'made the hands hang down loose'—at is, they took heart out of them; discouraged them: see Neh. v. 9.

**troubled:** Heb. (though the Hebrew letters have been accientally mixed) 'they frightened them as regards building,' i. e. ey terrified them so by threats that they were afraid to go on ith the work.

**5. hired counsellors,** &c.: paid men who had influence at the ersian court and skill in speech to plead their cause before the ing and his ministers; cf. Neh. xiii. 2. The verb translated **to rustrate** means lit. 'to break,' and occurs also in Neh. iv. 9.

**the days of Cyrus . . . until the reign of Darius,** i. e. ourteen years, made up as follows; five (last) years of Cyrus, even years of Cambyses, seven months of Pseudo-Smerdis, two ears of Darius (Hystaspis).

## IV. 6–23 (1 Esd. ii. 15–25 (26)).

### Opposition to the Building of the City Walls a Short Tim before the First Arrival of Nehemiah, or after hi Arrival and During his Work.

This section has strayed from its proper place in Nehemiah, o more probably from its place between Ezra x and Neh. i. It ha nothing to do with the building of the *Temple*, which had been completed before Ezra's arrival: it is of the restoration of the *wall* that we here read (see ver. 12). In a similar way Neh. vii. 73 to x belong to the life and work of Ezra and not to those of Nehemiah, and must be placed in what we call 'Ezra' (see on tha passage). It is marvellous, remembering that books in those time consisted of prepared skins written on and then attached, that fa more of our O.T. is not dislocated than is the case.

Apart from the fact that we read in these verses of the repairin of the *walls* and not of the restoration of the *Temple*, chronologica considerations show that we have here a narrative that is out o its true connexion. In ver. 6 we read of King Xerxes (485–465) and in verses 7–23 it is of his successor Artaxerxes (Longimanus 465–423) that we read. Then in ver. 24 we have mention o King Darius, by whom we are certainly to understand Dariu Hystaspis (521–486). Ingenious and learned attempts have bee made to account for this chronological anomaly, none of them s satisfactory as the explanation given above, which is that o many recent scholars (Kuenen, v. Hoonacker, Kent, &c.). It shoul be said that all external evidence, including that of 1 Esd. ii i against transferring verses 6–23 to Nehemiah.

Where are we to place the incidents of Ezra iv. 7–23? Probably, with Meyer and v. Hoonacker, between Ezra x and Neh. and not with Kent after Neh. vi, since in the latter chapter we rea of the completion of the walls. The sad condition of Jerusalem and of its inhabitants which Neh. i. 3 implies seems to be tha which followed upon the royal edict in Ezra iv. 21 ff. The surprise and grief of Nehemiah on hearing the report of Hanani, h brother, must have been due not to his learning for the first tim of the royal edict—of that he could not but have had knowledge— but to his hearing of the cruel way in which that edict was carrie out. It was of some recent calamity that Nehemiah heard, an not, as Keil, Schultz, &c., held, of the destruction of Jerusalem i 586 by Nebuchadnezzar. This latter could have been no news t Nehemiah, not even the manner and results of it. Graetz an Kosters deny the historicity of the section, mainly because (se ver. 12) it implies that there was a return of exiles before th arrival of Ezra and his companions; but see Introd., p. 23 ff.

According to the present text (M.T.) of verses 6 ff., three lette of complaint are forwarded to the Persian court. (1) One is se to King Xerxes—by whom we are not told, though we mu ign of [a] Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote

[a] Or, *Xerxes* Heb. *Ahashverosh.*

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nderstand the Samaritans to be the senders. (2) A second is
nt by Mithredath. (3) Rehum, &c., forward a letter—the third
be mentioned in verses 6–8. In 1 Esd. ii. 16 the first letter
er. 6) is ignored, and the senders of 2 and 3 are united and
ade the senders of one letter between them, though Rehum, the
ommander, and Shimshai, the recorder (the names differ con-
derably in the Greek of the Apocrypha) are mentioned twice,
howing that there is some confusion. In the original text men-
on was made, perhaps, of two letters : (1) one sent in the reign
f Xerxes (ver. 6) ; (2) another sent to Artaxerxes from members
f the Samaritan party at Jerusalem (Mithredath, &c.) through
he Persian officials, Rehum, &c., who resided at Samaria ; it is
them that the king sends his answer. Probably, however, we
re with 1 Esdras to omit ver. 6 (see on), so that we have but one
etter sent to Artaxerxes I, and not two. This one letter was
ent from Jerusalem by Jewish leaders to the Persian official at
amaria, to be forwarded to the king : see on verses 8–10.
lostermann[1], followed in part by Sellin, holds that in this
orrespondence it is Tabeel and his companions who write in the
ame ('Bishlam' is so read) of Mithredath to plead with the
ing to allow the Jews to go on with their work of rebuilding,
dding the incidents mentioned in v. 1–vi. 18 to show that in the
ast the charges brought against the Jews had been found base-
ss, as the charges now made are likely to be. This view of the
ramaic section, besides requiring a large number of textual
hanges, is in itself most improbable.

**6.** This verse cannot go along with verses 7–23 if the above
lacing of this section is correct, since Ahasuerus (the Xerxes
f the Greek) reigned 485–465 B.C., so that nothing occurring in
is reign could belong to the period between Ezra x and Neh. i
cir. 446 B.C.) or to the time following the events of Neh. vi.
robably the verse was inserted as a link of connexion between
v. 5 and verses 7–23 after the latter verses had by mistake got
nto their present context. Nothing corresponding to this
erse occurs in the parallel section of 1 Esdras, which is an
dditional reason for regarding it as an interpolation.

**Ahasuerus:** Heb. *Akhashwerosh* ; Old Pers. *Khshayārshā* ;
ram. Papyri (Sayce and Cowley, consonants only) *Kšy'rš* : the
ell-known king of Persia called Xerxes by the Greek historians.

**wrote they:** render 'there was written,' which the Hebrew
qually allows. We are not told who made the charge. According
the present connexion of the verse it must have been the
amaritan party.

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[1] *Herzog*$^{(3)}$, V., p. 516 f.

they an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah an
Jerusalem.
7 [$\mathbf{C}_{A}$] And in the days of [a]Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mith
redath, Tabeel, and the rest of his companions, unto Arta
xerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter wa
written in the [b]Syrian *character*, and set forth in the [b]Syria
8 *tongue.* [c] Rehum the chancellor and Shimshai the scrib

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[a] Heb. *Artahshashta.* [b] Or, *Aramaic*
[c] Ch. iv. 8–vi. 18 is in Aramaic.

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**accusation:** Heb. *sitnah* (occurring here only in the O.T.) cognate with the noun *Satan*, 'one that accuses,' or 'maligns.'

7–10. *Letter sent to Artaxerxes.* See Remarks, p. 84 f.

**7. Bishlam:** read 'with (their) greeting'; so LXX (includin *Luc.*), Syr., Klosterm.: 'Mithredath, &c., write sending thei respects.' No change in the original Hebrew text is necessar and but a change of one vowel in the present text.

**Mithredath:** not the Persian official of i. 8. The Persian mentioned in ver. 7 were all probably residents in Jerusalem members of the Samaritan party, all of them also, it would seem subordinate officials of the Persian government.

**Tabeel:** an Aramaic name = 'God is good' (see Isa. vii. 6)

**letter:** Heb. *nisht*$^{e}$*wan*, of Persian origin: found only i Ezra. See on ver. 8 (**letter**).

For **Syrian** ('Syriac' is now used of the language and of it letters) use 'Aramaic,' which is a broader term. The R.Vm. give the right sense of the Hebrew. It was neither the Persia character nor the Persian language. Though it would seem firs written in Persian by Persian officials, the letter was then translated into Aramaic, the language of Persian diplomacy (se p. 13 ff.), and of course then written with Aramaic characters– the so-called Assyrian or square letters used in modern Heb. Bible

8–10. The letter composed and written at Jerusalem was se to the Commander and Recorder of Transpotamia, who resided i Samaria. They were asked to transmit it with their dispatches to th king. At the close of the verse we must supply actually or in sens words similar to ('forwarded the letter') 'which was as follows.

8–23 is written in Aramaic closely resembling that of the papy recently found in Egypt. See p. 13 ff.

**8. Rehum . . . Shimshai:** that the letter indited in Jerusale was sent through these two men and their associates is confirme by the fact that the answer of the king was addressed to thes same persons. It is, however, evident that verses 8 f. have g

wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king in this sort: then *wrote* Rehum the chancellor, and Shim- 9
shai the scribe, and the rest of their companions; the

somewhat mixed up, the above two names being mentioned by mistake twice. Render as follows: 8. 'Rehum . . . and Shimshai 9. and the rest (being) their associates (viz.) the judges,' &c.

**chancellor:** lit. 'master of counsel,' i. e. counsellor. We are no doubt to understand the subordinate or Samaritan lieutenant of the Transpotamian Satrap. So Meyer, Menti, Bertholet, &c. With the rapid extension of the Persian empire under Cyrus the territory was divided into four large satrapies, the country west of the Euphrates and south of the Taurus and Amanus being one. In Ezra viii. 36, &c., Neh. ii. 7, 9, &c., and in 1 Kings iv. 24 (Heb. v. 4) it has the name *Eber Hannahar*, which = 'what is beyond the river' (Euphrates), and as it is really a proper name we must call it by its Hebrew name (against its slightly different Aramaic form 'speaks') or call it Transpotamia, a name corresponding to Mesopotamia (= between the rivers), though this new name does not of course occur as Mesopotamia does in classical or in any authors. Throughout the present volume 'Transpotamia' will be used. Meyer transliterates the Aramaic, calling the satrapy 'Abarnahara.' That the name was used regardless of its literal sense is shown by the fact that it is used by those who lived west of the Euphrates as well as by those residing east of that river: see the passages already referred to. Notwithstanding the meaning of the name the district embraced also the Aramaean country and some other localities east of the river. See Meyer, *Gesch.*, iii. 136 f.; cf. p. 49 ff.

**the scribe:** i. e. chief secretary of the Samaritan lieutenant.

**a letter:** the word used (here in its Aram. form) denotes always an official communication, as from the king or governor. It occurs only in its Hebrew form (*iggeret*) in Nehemiah (five times), Esther (twice), and Chronicles (twice). In its Aramaic form it is found in Ezra (four times) alone. It may be of Babylonian origin (*egirtu*), as Fried. Delitzsch, Sayce, Meissner, &c., hold, but that is uncertain[1]. See on ver. 7 and on Neh. ii. 7.

9 f. *Those who joined Rehum and Shimshai in the appeal to Artaxerxes.* We have here a mixture of official and tribal (or local?) names which have caused much discussion, and in regard to which no certain conclusion is possible. Perhaps even the names of peoples are to be understood in an official sense: e. g. the Babylonians = those in charge of astronomical matters and questions of the calendar arising therefrom, &c.

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[1] Prof. Sayce says that the etymology of the word can be explained from the Babylonian alone, which shows, in his opinion, that the Hebrew and Aramaic terms are borrowed from the Babylonian.

Dinaites, and the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the
Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Shushanchites,
10 the Dehaites, the Elamites, and the rest of the
nations whom the great and noble Osnappar brough

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**9. the Dinaites,** &c.: render, 'The Persian judges, the Persian tarpelites, &c., the Archevites,' &c. The words Apharsathchites, Apharsites in ver. 9, and Apharsachites in v. 6 and vi have never been satisfactorily explained, though many guesses have been made as to places whence the words are supposed to be derived. Hoffmann and Meyer suggest that at the basis o each word we have the Hebrew and Aramaic word for Persia—the consonants are identical—and that the *ch* in Apharsathchites and Apharsachites is the old Persian (Iranian) adjectival ending Meyer then omits 'and,' rendering as above. The 'Persian judges' and the 'Persian tarpelites' (an unexplained official term) of the Samaritan subsatrapy are not to be classed with those whom the Assyrian king Osnappar transported. Of many explanations this seems to the present writer the most likely, or at any rate the least unlikely one. See Meyer, *Entst.*, 35 ff. v. Hoonacker (*Nouvelles Études*, p. 166 ff.) argues strongly that the words here stand for peoples and not for officials, as Kosters maintained.

**Dinaites:** read (slightly altering the vowels) 'judges.' Se 1 Esdras, *Luc.*, and some MSS. of the LXX.

**Apharsathchites:** render 'Persian.' The initial is prosthetic and no part of the root (so often in similar words: see Meyer, as above), and the 't' wrongly inserted. The original letters corresponding to 'phars' are those of Persia.

**Tarpelites:** probably officials, though the etymology of the word is untraceable. Perhaps the text is at fault.

**Apharsites:** render 'Persian' (see above).

**Archevites:** people from Erek (Gen. x. 10), the Assyrian Arku=Urku in Babylon.

**Shushanchites:** the *ch* is the old Persian (Iran.) adjective ending (see on **Apharsathchites**)[1]. We are to understand people from Susa.

**the Dehaites, the Elamites:** read and render 'that is the Elamites,' Susa being the ancient capital of Elam: so LXX (not *Luc.*) and most moderns. We should hardly in English speak of 'Londoners and English people.'

**10. Osnappar:** identified first by Gelzer and since by nearly all scholars with Ashurbanipal (king of Assyria from 668 to 626), the Sardanapallos of the Greeks. Two consonants have dropped out of the word; in other respects the consonants of both words

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[1] The old Elamite form is 'Susunqa.' (So Sayce).

ver, and set in the city of Samaria, and in the rest *of*
*he country* beyond the river, and so forth. This is the 11
opy of the letter that they sent unto Artaxerxes the
ing; Thy servants the men beyond the river, and so
orth. Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which 12

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re almost identical, notwithstanding the differences in English. and *l* are written very much alike in Aramaic : see Sayce and owley (*Aramaic Papyri*).

**brought over**: this does not apply to the Persian officials entioned in the preceding verse : see notes on.

**in the rest**, &c. : render 'in other parts of Transpotamia.' he words in italics are not needed. The Aramaic (and Hebrew) or 'beyond the river' is really a proper name, and might well be epresented in English by Transpotamia, cf. Mesopotamia. The roper name thus suggested is, though a hybrid, less objection-ble than any other which occurs to the present writer. 'Beyond e river' is misleading, as it is often used of dwellers who are emselves 'beyond the river' (Euphrates), though it denotes the ame stretch of country in their mouths as in the mouths of, say, ersians : see on ver. 8.

Samaria was not the only part of the province or satrapy whither e Assyrian king brought foreign settlers. These, or the officials o designated, joined in the message to the Persian king.

**and so forth**: render (wrote) 'as follows.' The original ords are used (see vii. 12 and the Aramaic papyri) as a formula troducing a letter. The verb 'wrote' is to be supplied from er. 9, but in Aramaic (as in Hebrew) does not need to be repeated.

11–16. *Contents of the letter containing the accusation.*

Kuenen (*Einleitung*, i. 2, 178) and Stade (*Gesch.*, ii. 159) say that e letter bears marks of fabrication with a view to extolling the ower of the Jews (see verses 13, 19 f.). But the senders of such missive would of set purpose magnify the power of the Jewish ommunity.

**11. copy**: the word used here is of Persian origin ; it occurs ver. 23, v. 6, vii. 11, and (with the difference of one letter) in sther iii. 14, iv. 8, viii. 13.

**the men beyond the river**: render 'the men of Transpo-mia' : see on ver. 8.

**and so forth**: see on ver. 10.

**12. Jews**: this is the earliest occurrence of this word for the ew religious community in Jerusalem ; previously it denoted the habitants of the Southern Kingdom (2 Kings xvi. 6, xxv. 25, &c.). is in this new sense that the term is now employed. With us Jews' are those who profess Judaism wherever they live.

came up from thee are come to us unto Jerusalem; they
are building the rebellious and the bad city, and hav
13 finished the walls, and repaired the foundations. Be i
known now unto the king, that, if this city be builded
and the walls finished, they will not pay tribute, custom
14 or toll, and in the end it will endamage the kings. No
because we eat the salt of the palace, and it is not mee
for us to see the king's dishonour, therefore have w
15 sent and certified the king; that search may be made i
the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt tho

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**have finished**, &c.: in the next verse the finishing of th wall is still in the future. Better therefore treat the forms of th verb here and there as future perfects: 'They are building . . . an will have finished . . . and repaired.' Tense as such is not expresse in Semitic, but manner of action, either completed or still pr ceeding, and that in past, present, or future. See *Heinrich Ewal a Centenary Appreciation* (by the present writer), pp. 48 ff., 81 f

**13. tribute:** a money contribution paid by a subject provin to the imperial exchequer: see vi. 8 and Neh. v. 4.

**custom:** a tax levied on income (merchandise, agricultur produce, proceeds of the chase or of fishing, &c.), and used for t maintenance of the province itself and the payment of its official

**toll:** a road tax for the upkeep of the roads and for maki new ones. Cf. the charge made in this country until lately turnpike gates.

**in the end:** so Bertheau-Ryssel (tracing the word Persian), Fried. Delitzsch (deriving from Babylonian), and other The majority of scholars, changing the final letter to one almo exactly like it (*s* for *m*), give it a rendering similar to that of t A.V., translating this part of the verse thus: 'and it (the cit will affect injuriously the revenue of the kings.' So the Rabbi

**14. we eat the salt of the palace:** in Aramaic the ve rendered eat and the noun for salt are cognate, 'we eat salt of t salt,' &c. Cf. Heb. 'to sacrifice a sacrifice = to offer a sacrific (see Num. v. 15). This is a common idiom in Semitic: 'To e of the salt of the palace' = 'to be in the king's service.' Kautzs (*Aram. Grammar*, 71, 72), followed by Bertholet, holds t a symbolic act is here to be understood, viz. making a covena by salt: see Num. xviii. 19; 2 Chron. xiii. 5; cf. Lev. ii. 13. *BDB*., which interprets: 'we have assumed obligations loyalty.'

**15. book:** read (with *Luc.*, Vulg., 1 Esd. ii. 21) 'book

ind in the book of the records, and know that this city is
a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces,
and that they have moved sedition within the same of old
ime: for which cause was this city laid waste. We cer- 16
ify the king that, if this city be builded, and the walls
inished, by this means thou shalt have no portion beyond
he river. *Then* sent the king an answer unto Rehum the 17

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We must understand, however, in the case of Assyria and Babylon, clay tablets similar to those found some twenty years ago in Tel-el-Amarna, Egypt. The Persians had (Ktesias says) adopted the custom prevalent in Palestine of writing with ink on skins. The reference is to state records such as were kept by Greeks (see *Herod.* viii. 90), Egyptians (*Zeitschrift für Ägyptologie*, xxxviii. 8), and other ancient nations. See vi. 1; Esther ii. 23, vi. 1; 2 Macc. i. 13; cf. Mal. iii. 16, and my note on Esther ii. 23.

**fathers:** i. e. predecessors, Persian, Babylon, and Assyrian.

**and that they,** &c.: 1 Esd. ii. 23 supplies the subject 'the Jews,' which has accidentally fallen out of the Hebrew.

**city laid waste:** referring to its destruction in 586 by Nebuchadnezzar. Jerusalem would not have been destroyed but for the disloyalty of its subject-king (Zedekiah) and people to its Babylonian conqueror.

**16.** The king is assured that if he allows Jerusalem to be once more fortified it would throw off allegiance to him as it had to his Babylonian predecessor in 586.

**beyond the river:** i. e. in Transpotamia: see on ver. 8.

17–23. *The king's reply.* Kosters and others see in ver. 19 a proof that the whole of this section is an invention of the Chronicler to magnify the importance of the Jewish nation in the past. But it would harmonize with the scheme of the Samaritan party to exaggerate the past power of the Jews, so as to make the king afraid of the power they might yet acquire and use. Besides, conquerors often make the power of conquered foes greater than it is, so as to make their own prowess appear the greater.

Wellhausen objects to the historicity of this narrative because (he says) the Artaxerxes who (Neh. ii) permitted the walls to be built could not at an earlier date have prohibited the same and commanded the demolition of what was built. But he forgets or does not know that, as Nöldeke, Meyer, and other historians have pointed out, this king was a very capricious man, and did many things which it is impossible to reconcile with any consistent policy.

chancellor, and to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest c
their companions that dwell in Samaria, and [a] in the res
18 *of the country* beyond the river, Peace, and so forth. Th
letter which ye sent unto us hath been [b] plainly read befor
19 me. And I decreed, and search hath been made, and
is found that this city of old time hath made insurrectio
against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have bee
20 made therein. There have been mighty kings also ove
Jerusalem, which have ruled over all *the country* beyon
the river; and tribute, custom, and toll, was paid unt

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[a] Or, *unto the rest beyond &c.* [b] Or, *translated*

17–22. *Answer of the king.* The king's answer came to Rehu and his companions; there was therefore but one letter sent this time, not two: see on verses 6–23.

**17. answer:** the original term here (*pithgama*) comes from th Persian and denotes usually the decision of a king (see Esther i. 20

**chancellor**: see on v. 8.

**18. plainly** (read): lit. 'distinctly,' separating the sounds ar words so as to make the meaning clear. Ignore the R. Vm. 'tran lated.' The verb, whence the word occurring here, denotes Heb. and Aram. primarily 'to separate,' and then 'to interpre But here (Aram.) and in Neh. viii. 8 (Heb.) the passive particip is used adverbially 'distinctly,' i. e. sounding the words and par of words so that each can be followed and understood.

**19. this city of old time hath made insurrection,** &c.: s 2 Kings xviii. 7; xxiv. 1, 20.

**20.** Render, 'And mighty kings have there been over Jer salem, yea (such as) have exercised rule over all Transpotami &c. We need not understand these words as stating what strictly true. The officials in Samaria would have strong reaso for exaggeration. The more powerful Jewish kings had been th greater the danger to the Persian power now. Still the words see hardly too strong as applied to David and Solomon, and the archiv of their reigns might well have been preserved at Jerusalem un removed by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon. G. Rawlinson thinks th reference is either to Menahem, King of Israel (see 2 Kings x 14–16), or to Josiah (2 Chron. xxxiv. 6 f.; xxxv. 18); but the sta of things in their reigns does not correspond to this descriptio On the Arch of Titus at Rome there is an equally exaggerat account of the greatness of Jerusalem, which Titus had conquer and destroyed, and these words are due to the Roman Senate.

**tribute**, &c.: see on ver. 13.

hem. Make ye now a decree to cause these men to 21
ease, and that this city be not builded, until a decree
hall be made by me. And take heed that ye be not slack 22
erein: why should damage grow to the hurt of the
ings? Then when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter 23
was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and
heir companions, they went in haste to Jerusalem unto
he Jews, and made them to cease by force and power.
$T_A$] Then ceased the work of the house of God which 24
s at Jerusalem; and it ceased unto the second year of
he reign of Darius king of Persia.

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**21. until a decree,** &c.: such a decree was issued to Nehemiah: ee Neh. ii. 8 ff.

**22. why,** &c.: render, 'lest mischief be increased so as to injure he kings.' So essentially the Versions.

**Rehum:** add 'the counsellor' as in verses 8 f. and 17 with he Versions, including *Luc.* and 1 Esdras ii. 25.

23. *The work is stopped as the king commanded.*

**23. by force and power:** lit. 'with an arm and with strength,' . e. 'with a strong arm,' a hendiadys. The second word means also 'an army,' 'a crowd of people.' Syr. 'with a powerful army,' which the original may mean, as 'arm' often = 'strength' see Job xxii. 8, &c.), and 'strength and army' = a 'strong army' hendiadys).

## IV. 24–VI. 22 (|| 1 Esd. ii. $25^b$ + VI, VII).

## CONTINUATION OF THE NARRATIVE INTERRUPTED BY IV. 6–23. THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE, WITH THE APPROVAL AND SUPPORT OF THE KING OF PERSIA.

iv. 24–v. 5. *Rebuilding of the Temple resumed and opposed.*

iv. 24. This verse is the natural continuation of ver. 5. The interruption in the building of the Temple lasted until the second year of Darius Hystaspis, i. e. until 520. The occurrence (twice) of the verb 'cease' in ver. 24 and of the transitive form (Pa.) of the same verb in ver. 23 may have led the compiler to place iv. 6–23 immediately before ver. 24, though in reality the latter has reference to the Temple, the interpolated passage to the walls.

v. 17. *Haggai and Zechariah urge the people to complete the building of the Temple.*

From the fact that under the influence of the preaching of these prophets the work of building the Temple was resumed

5 Now the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zecharia

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it may be inferred that this task was not made impossible b simply difficult by the Samaritan party: see on iv. 4. To wha are we to ascribe this fresh interest in the Temple? Probabl as Meyer points out[1], it is to the expectation which had arise that the Messianic time was dawning. Many of the sig spoken of by the older prophets had shown themselves. Th Persian kingdom at the accession of Darius (521) was tor asunder by internal dissensions, its very existence being e dangered by the defection of subject countries, such as Assyri Armenia, Babylon, Media, Parthia, and especially Susiana, whic almost succeeded in regaining its independence. All this seeme to portend a still greater shaking of the nations, presaging t fall of Persia and the setting up of the Messianic kingdo with Zerubbabel as king (see Hag. ii. 23, Zech. vi. 8–13, an Driver's notes in *Century Bible*). The celestial signs of t downfall of Persia resemble those which were to precede th of Babylon (Isa. xiii. 10, 13; cf. Amos v. 18; Ezek. xxxii. 7 f and Joel ii. 27). Sellin[2] has tried to prove that a Messian kingdom was actually established in Judaea with Zerubbab for king, but that this part of the province was reconquere Zerubbabel being put to death. Winckler holds a simil position. To both the suffering servant in Isa. liii is Zerubbabel, wh suffered at the hand of the Persian government for the good of t people. Much of this is mere speculation capable of neither pro nor disproof. But it is probable that both Haggai and Zecharia were prompted in their preaching by a belief that the Messiah wa about to make His appearance; that the Temple was therefore be built for His reception, so that all the nations of the earth mig gather therein to worship the one true God (see Isa. ii. 2–4, &c.

**1.** (the prophets, Haggai) **the prophet:** though apparent unnecessary after what precedes, its correctness is support by vi. 14, Hag. i. 1. 'Haggai the prophet' seems one who clause, not to be broken up. Haggai (see his book) reproves t people for their delay in going on with the work of building t Temple. His prophecies were uttered in the second year of Dari (520); that Darius Hystaspis († 485) is meant and not Dari Nothus († 404) is proved by the fact that some of the prese builders had seen the Temple destroyed in 586: see Hag. ii. 3.

**Zechariah, the son of Iddo:** the word rendered 'son' mea often descendant; here it means grandson: see Zech. i. 'Zechariah the prophet, son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo.' W probably read in Neh. xii. 4 of this Iddo as head of a priest

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[1] *Geschichte*, iii. 194 ff.; *Entstehung*, 174 ff. So Driver, 'Min Prophets' (*Century Bible*), 151 f. [2] *Serubbabel*.

he son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in
udah and Jerusalem; in the name of the God of Israel
*prophesied they* unto them. Then rose up Zerubbabel 2
he son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and
egan to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem;
nd with them were the prophets of God, helping them.

[a] Or, which was *upon them*

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amily that returned with Zerubbabel and Jeshua: and in Jeh. xii. 16 mention is made of a 'Zechariah son of Iddo' as ead of a priestly house in the time of Nehemiah. The latter vould be a descendant of the prophet. The same names contantly recur in oriental genealogical lists (Arabic, Hebrew, Samaritan, &c.).

In Zechariah's genuine prophecies (Zech. i–viii) there are eight isions in which that number of difficulties or discouragements re severally disposed of. The prophet shows that the way s really open; that with God's help they could and should o forward with the work. Zechariah's prophecies belong to the ears 519–517, being dated in the second and fourth year of Darius.

**prophesied:** the Hebrew verb in the form which occurs here neans to perform the part of the *nabi* or prophet, as it is rendered. he word *nabi* means probably first of all a speaker; then a peaker on behalf of God, or one commissioned by God. Kuenen nd others give the noun a passive sense, 'one that is stirred up' r 'inspired to speak.' In any case the idea of prediction is not n the word itself, though one that speaks by the authority or nspiration of God will sometimes speak of the future, especially vhen warning men of the consequence of sin.

**the Jews . . . in Judah and Jerusalem:** i. e. those in the ountry parts of Judah and in Jerusalem, in contrast with those emaining in Babylon and other places out of Palestine.

**in the name,** &c.: render, as in the R.Vm., 'in the name of he God of Israel who was over them.'

**2. Zerubbabel:** see on i. 8 and ii. 2 and ver. 1 f.

**Jeshua:** see on ii. 2.

**began to build:** see on iii. 8–13. The former beginning vas so slight, and what was done so injured in the intervening ixteen years, that a new beginning had to be made.

Here and in iii. 8 Zerubbabel and Jeshua are the leaders in uilding. In verses 5, 9 and in vi. 7, 8, 14, the elders alone are nentioned. Bertholet thinks the difference due to different ources, but why? Were they not elders (see ii. 2), and did hey not act in the name of the other elders? And did not elegance hen as now suggest variety of expression as a desirable thing?

3 At the same time came to them Tattenai, the govern beyond the river, and Shethar-bozenai, and their con panions, and said thus unto them, Who gave you
4 decree to build this house, and to finish this wall? [a] The

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[a] Or, *Then spake we unto them after this manner. What,* sa they, *are the names of the men that make this building?* C according to some ancient versions, *Then spake they unto them &* See ver. 10.

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v. 3–vi. 12, see on vi. 7 (1 Esd. vi. 3–34). *Unsuccessful oppositi of the Persian officials and their allies to the building of the Templ*

v. 3–5. *Persian officials make inquiries of the builders.*

**3. Tattenai:** called Sisinnes in 1 Esd. vi. 3 and in Josep *Antiq.* xi. 1. 3. In the Cuneiform contract tablets of the first a third years of Darius Hystaspis (Nos. 27 and 82) mention made of an Uštannai, governor or satrap of Transpotamia: is described in Assyrian word for word as here in Arama [lit. governor of the (province) across the river]. That the sa individual is meant is hardly open to doubt. Bruno Meissner w was the first to point out this identification thinks that here a vi. 6, where alone it occurs in the O. T., we should read 'Ustanna from which Tattenai could easily arise.

There is surely no difficulty, though Wellhausen and others s there is an insuperable one, in thinking of Tattenai on becomi satrap of the whole of Transpotamia as ignorant of an edict issu sixteen years before by Cyrus. In comparison with the wh province he administered, Palestine was a mere corner, and people of no great consequence politically. It may of course that, as Meyer and Bertholet conjecture, the satrap feigned ig rance only, so that he might throw in his influence with that of t Samaritans against the project which the Jews had in hand. is likely that he had been newly appointed, and that he was n on a tour of inspection through his satrapy.

**governor:** here, as in ver. 6, vi. 6, and Neh. iii. 7, in sense of satrap (see on viii. 36). Generally the word found h (*pekhah*) denotes a ruler of a sub-satrapy or province (Sama Judah, &c.).

**Shethar-bozenai:** probably chief secretary to Tattenai, Shimshai to Rehum (iv. 8). Read (with Meyer and Andre Marti) 'Mithra-bozenai' = (in Persian) 'Mithra is Saviour': *m* *sh* are much alike, and vowels are not written in ancient Hebre

**wall:** so Syr. and Vulg.: see also v. 9. This rendering supported by the cognate languages (Assyrian, &c.), and by the sense required for the word in the other known pl of its occurrence (the Sachau Aramaic Papyri I, line 11), 'Th

pake we unto them after this manner, What are the names
f the men that make this building? But the eye of their 5
iod was upon the elders of the Jews, and they did not make
ıem cease, till the matter should come to Darius, and
ıen [a] answer should be returned by letter concerning it.
The copy of the letter that Tattenai, the governor be- 6
ond the river, and Shethar-bozenai, and his companions
ıe Apharsachites, which were beyond the river, sent unto
)arius the king: they sent a letter unto him, wherein was 7
ritten thus; Unto Darius the king, all peace. Be it 8

[a] Or, *they returned answer*

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estroyed the temple . . . the stone pillars . . . stone gates, doors, ɔof and the panelling of the *wall*.' Nikel, Haupt, Bertholet, :c., translate 'sanctuary,' and support this by another Assyrian ord (*ashru*), which however means 'place,' 'position,' and by ıe supposed parallelism with 'house,' though Assyrian *ashirtu* oes mean 'Temple.'

**4.** (Then spake) **we:** read (with LXX, Syr.) 'they,' i.e. 'attenai, &c., 'spake unto them' (Zerubbabel, &c.) 'after this ıanner,' &c. If we follow the M. T. we must (with Meyer) ɛgard the words 'Then spake we' as taken verbatim from the ıtrap's report.

**5.** Tattenai gave no orders that the work should be suspended ending the inquiry to be made. The answer could not reach ɛrusalem from Susa before some four or five months had passed y. That during these months the building was allowed to go n is regarded as a sure sign that God's watchful eye was upon ıe work and the workers. See Dan. xi. 12.

**elders:** see on ver. 2.

V. 6–VI. 12. THE CORRESPONDENCE WITH DARIUS (1 Esd. vi).

v. 6–17. *The letter sent to Darius by Tattenai, &c.*

**6. the Apharsachites:** see on iv. 9 f. Render 'the Persian officials),' i.e. those in iv. 9 called 'judges' (R. V. 'Dinaites') ıd 'tarpelites' (an unexplained official name).

**beyond the river:** render 'in Transpotamia,' and see p. 87.

**7. letter:** here the word so translated (*pithgama*) is of Persian rigin. In iv. 17 it is rendered 'answer,' in vi. 11 'word.' The rm in ver. 6 translated 'letter' (*igarta*) is Aramaic.

**all peace:** the Aramaic and the cognate Hebrew, Arabic, c., words, too narrowly rendered 'peace,' include in their meang all the elements of well-being, the idea of completeness being

known unto the king, that we went into the province
Judah, to the house of the great God, which is builde
with great stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and thi
work goeth on with diligence and prospereth in the
9 hands. Then asked we those elders, and said unt
them thus, Who gave you a decree to build this hous
10 and to finish this wall? We asked them their name
also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of th
11 men that were at the head of them. And thus the

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inherent in the root. It is used as a form of greeting in all t Semitic languages, and also in several of the languages of Indi See on Ps. cxix. 165 (*Century Bible*). The addition of 'al strengthens the greeting.

**8. the great God:** Tattenai, &c., speak in the language of t Jews. Similarly Cyrus calls Marduk, the principal Babyloni deity, 'the great Lord,' though not himself a Marduk worshipp *Luc.* and 1 Esd. vi. 9 attach the adjective 'great' to 'house' a not to God (Lord); the Aramaic original allows, though does n require, this.

**great stones:** lit. 'stones of rolling,' i. e. stones too large be carried, and having therefore to be rolled. Some of the ston in the western wall of the Temple at Jerusalem which are still *situ* are twenty-six feet long, six feet high, and seven feet bro Amid the ruined temples of Baalbek there are stones still larg The renderings of the LXX ('chosen stones') and of the *L* and 1 Esd. vi. 9 ('polished costly stones') are due to a misund standing of the M.T. rather than to a different reading. 1 Kings v. 31 the expression is 'great stones,' which perh should be read here; the difference in the Hebrew is very slig

**timber is laid,** &c.: i. e. wooden beams were set in walls to support floors and ceiling. Siegfried, however, thinks meaning to be that the walls were covered with wood panelli but this would indicate too advanced a stage of the building.

**with diligence:** the original word is Persian and me 'with care and diligence.'

**9. elders:** see on ver. 2. **wall:** see on ver. 3.

**10. names:** for the names of the elders see ii. 2.

**that were at the head of them:** render 'that were t leaders' (or 'chiefs'), i. e. in the building. The word rende 'head' is plural (though somewhat irregularly written), and preposition (*beth essentiae* of the grammars) one which o introduces the predicate.

In verses 11-16 we have the answer which the Jews are

eturned us answer, saying, We are the servants of the
od of heaven and earth, and build the house that was
uilded these many years ago, which a great king of
srael builded and finished. But [a] after that our fathers 12
ad provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave
hem into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,
he Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the
eople away into Babylon. But in the first year of 13
yrus king of Babylon, Cyrus the king made a decree to

[a] Or, *because that*

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o have given to Tattenai, &c. We might have expected this nswer immediately after ver. 4.

**11. We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth:** herefore of the same God whom the Persians professed to cknowledge. It is strange to find Stade[1] speaking of these ords as unlikely to be uttered by Persians, for they are quoted s spoken by Jews. But see on ver. 8 and on vii. 21.

**these many years ago:** i. e. nearly 500 years before the eign of Darius.

**a great king:** i. e. Solomon.

**12.** Render 'Nevertheless after our fathers provoked,' &c.

**after that:** the Aramaic words are identical with those at the ommencement of iv. 23, translated by one English word 'when.' hough the expression is temporal not (as R. V., Bertheau-yssel, Ryle) causal, yet it is implied that the destruction of he Temple by Nebuchadnezzar came as a punishment for the in of their fathers in angering God: it was not that God could ot preserve it if He would.

**Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean:** the haldeans were strictly a people inhabiting a country (Assyrian *aldâ*) south-east of Babylonia on what was then the sea-coast. hey were conquered by Nabopolassar, King of Babylon (d. 605), nd thenceforward Babylonian and Chaldean meant much the same. ebuchadnezzar was probably by descent a Chaldean. The Chaldean anguage, though Semitic, is to be carefully distinguished from the estern or Biblical Aramaic, often inaccurately called 'Chaldee.' he latter is the language of the present chapter; the former losely resembles Babylonian, though without the cuneiform script.

**13. Cyrus king of Babylon:** he is so called in at least leven undoubted cuneiform passages (see *ZDMG.* 51, p. 663). rtaxerxes is so described in Neh. xiii. 6, and in vi. 22 Darius is alled King of Assyria.

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[1] *Geschichte*, ii. 122 (note).

14 build this house of God. And the gold and silver ves
sels also of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezza
took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, an
brought them into the temple of Babylon, those di
Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Baoylon, an
they were delivered unto one whose name was Sheshba
15 zar, whom he had made governor ; and he said unto him
Take these vessels, go, put them in the temple that is i
Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in i
16 place. Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid th
foundations of the house of God which is in Jerusalem
and since that time even until now hath it been in buil
17 ing, and yet it is not completed. Now therefore, if
seem good to the king, let there be search made in th
king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon, wheth
it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king

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**14. gold and silver vessels:** see on i. 6-11.
**into the temple of Babylon:** read (with *Luc.*, 1 Esd. v. 1
'into his own temple,' i. e. the temple of Marduk.
**Cyrus the king:** see on i. 1.
**Sheshbazzar:** see on i. 8. Had he been identical w
Zerubbabel, the latter and his fellow elders (see ver. 9) could har
have failed in the reply to make this point clear. Cyrus's co
mission came to Sheshbazzar—so it appears here and in i. 8—a
not to Zerubbabel.

**15. in its place:** see on iii. 3.

**16.** Though Sheshbazzar, the Babylonian, laid the first foun
tion of the Temple the work had to be done over again
Zerubbabel, the Jew, and those with him: see iii. 10 and
iii. 8-13 and v. 2.
**and since that time,** &c.: these words do not imply t
there had been an off-and-on building of the Temple from the ti
its first foundation was laid. The building once begun can
spoken of as going on until it is completed: see on ver. 2.

**17. the king's treasure house:** that part of the royal pal
at Babylon in which gold, silver, and state documents were k
In 1850 Henry Layard discovered at Koyunjik, the anci
Nineveh, a part of the royal palace which had been used exclusiv
for storing the precious metals, documents (baked clay table
&c. (*Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 345). See on i. 8 and vii. 21.

build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was 6

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VI. 1–12 (1 Esd. vi. 23–34).

As a result of the investigation Darius decrees that the Jews be allowed and aided to complete the building of the Temple.

The objections to the historicity of this section have been many and various, most of them however, in the light of recent research, having little or no weight.

1. Kosters, Graetz, and others have seen a contradiction between verses 1 and 2. We are told (ver. 1) that the search was made in Babylon for Cyrus's edict, but that (ver. 2) it was actually found at Achmetha (Ecbatana). Are we, however, sure of a contradiction here? According to Spiegel (*Eran*, iii. 259), followed by Marquart[1], Bertholet[2], and Jampel[3], Persians had archives in all the cities in which they resided—Susa, Babylon, Persepolis, Pasagarda, and Ecbatana—and they were frequently moved from one city to another. Ferdinand Justi[4] mentions edicts found at Ecbatana in different languages, all spoken by peoples subject to Persia. We must think therefore of this edict as being first sought for in Babylon and at length found at Ecbatana. Had a forger been at work he would have written in ver. 2 either Babylon or Susa.

Kent's conjecture that in ver. 1 we should read 'from Babylon' (see below on ver. 1) implies a very slight change in the Hebrew and removes the difficulty noticed above. Torrey[5] understands by the Heb. *Babel* here 'Babylonia,' a term wide enough (he says, though inaccurately) to include Ecbatana.

2. A difficulty is seen by Kosters and others in the extraordinary generosity displayed by Darius, a generosity transcending that ascribed to Cyrus.

It is said that Haggai and Zechariah could not have complained of the poverty of the people if they had known of such gifts from the Persian king.

In reply note (1) that at a later time Artaxerxes promises Ezra even more for the support of Jewish worship: see vii. 12–26.

(2) It may be taken for granted that the two prophets named make their complaints either before or soon after the rebuilding had been begun: see Hag. ii. 3; Zech. i. 7, iv. 7–10. We may assume that the work lasted some four or five years. When Tattenai

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[1] *Fundamenta*, p. 50. [2] *Com.* 24. [3] *Wiederherstellung*, 102.

[4] *Geschichte des alten Persien*, 43. [5] *AJSL.* xxiv. 221 n.

and his companions appear on the scene the work had been probably already resumed.

(3) There is abundant evidence in the inscriptions that Darius Hystaspis and his successors interested themselves more in building or helping to build temples consecrated to other gods than their own (Ahura-Mazda), see Jampel, *Wiederherstellung*, 93 ff. We know from the ascertained tenets of Mazdaism and from the actual practice of Mazdaists of the time that such toleration in religious matters as the books of Ezra and Nehemiah imply is exactly what beforehand we might have expected. In the Gadatas inscription[1], discovered in 1889, we have a message sent by this very Darius to Gadatas, Persian governor at Magnesia, Asia Minor, in which the king rebukes this official for not having shown proper respect to the worshippers of Apollo, and especially for having made the priests of this god pay taxes like other people. He says that this deity has spoken to the Persians as well as to the Greeks. See p. 40.

An inscription in the still largely preserved Egyptian temple at Edfu acknowledges gifts by this Darius towards the expenses of the temple[2].

In the Aramaic papyri recently edited by Eduard Sachau[3] it is recorded that the Temple of Yahu at Yeb (Elephantinė) which had existed in the days of the (ancient) kings of Egypt had been spared by Cambyses, King of Persia, though he did not spare the temples of the native Egyptians, probably because these temples helped to develop the spirit of national independence We have here an illustration of the special favour shown by the early Persian kings to Yahwism or the religion of Jehovah, no doubt in part because their own religion was closely allied to it.

3. Marquart objects[4] that Palestine was too insignificant a par of the Persian dominions to receive so much consideration. Bu it must be remembered that, though in itself small, Palestine was the bridge between Egypt and Babylon, and that as such it was of the utmost importance to Persia as a base from which to attack either of these powers. It should be also borne in mind tha if Palestine were a smaller country than, say, Egypt, Darius did more on behalf of the religion of Egypt than for that of Palestine

Parallels to the procedure of Darius in reference to older edict as a guide for his own conduct are very plentiful in ancien history. In the Tel-el-Amarna tablets there are several such references. Winckler[5] points out that letters belonging to the

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[1] See Meyer, *Geschichte*, iii. §§ 26, 34, 57. The inscription i given complete (in German) by Bertholet, *Com.*, p. 26, from *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*, xiii. 529.

[2] Lepsius, *Abhandlungen der Berliner Academie*, 1875.

[3] Berlin, 1907, see p. 10.

[4] *Fundamenta*, 48 f.

[5] *KAT.*$^{(3)}$, p. 193.

nade in the house of the [a] archives, where the treasures
vere laid up in Babylon. And there was found at 2
Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of Media,
roll, and therein was thus written for a record. In the 3
irst year of Cyrus the king, Cyrus the king made a de-
ree ; Concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, let the

[a] Aram. *books*. [b] That is, *Ecbatana*.

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eign of Amenophis III, King of Egypt (fl. cir. 1500 B.C.), re first heard of in the reign of his successor, who quotes hem as supplying precedents or authority for his own actions. See further Jampel, *Wiederherstellung*, 104 f.

VI. 1–5. THE INVESTIGATION AND ITS RESULT.

**1.** Render, 'Then Darius the king made a decree and the rchives in the treasure house which (archives) had been brought (to Ecbatana) from Babylon were searched.' The above translation involves only a rearrangement of the words with but one slight exception, the change of 'in' to 'from,' i. e. the substitution of one letter for another greatly resembling it in the old Hebrew and Aramaic script. The changes are supported by a comparison of iv. 27 (treasure house) and of 1 Esd. vi. 23. In the original the verbs are active, not passive, according to a well-known Semitic idiom ('indefinite subject') : see on x. 17.

**2. Achmetha:** i. e. the Ecbatana of the Greek writers, the capital of Media and the summer residence of the ancient Persian kings. Its present name is Hamadan. See Judith i. 1 ff. ; 2 Macc. ix. 3 ; Tob. iii. 7, vi. 7.

**roll:** i. e. a clay tablet such as may be seen in the British Museum : so Marquart [1], Bertholet, Jahn, &c. No word for this exists in Aramaic or Hebrew, so that the nearest equivalent in these languages has to be used. Libraries of such tablets have been found at Koyunjik (Nineveh) and elsewhere. Ktesias, however, says (according to Sayce) that Persian official documents were written on parchment rolls which he had seen : see p. 168.

**and therein,** &c. : render 'and therein was thus written ; Memorandum : In the first year of Cyrus the king,' &c. The word rendered **a record** denotes 'take notice' or 'memorandum,' and refers to what follows. We have an exact parallel in the Sachau Aramaic papyri, iii.

**3. made a decree,** &c. : render 'made a decree as regards the house of God at Jerusalem (which was as follows) : Let the house be built where they offer sacrifices and bring offerings made by fire, its height sixty cubits, its breadth sixty cubits' (nothing anent the length).

**Concerning:** join with the preceding and punctuate as above :

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[1] *Fundamenta*, p. 48.

house be builded, the place where they offer sacrifices,
and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height
thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore
4 cubits; with three rows of great stones, and [a] a row

[a] According to the Sept., *one row of timber.*

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so LXX, Marti, Bertholet, A. V. The Hebrew accents support the arrangement of words in the R.V.: so Syr. The Hebrew text itself admits of either.

**foundations thereof,** &c. The M. T. can mean only 'its foundations are borne' (carried) or 'bear' (carry), which yields no suitable meaning. Far better make a trivial change in the vowels, which are no part of the original text, and render as above: 'and (where they) bring offerings made by fire.' So Haupt (Guthe, *SBOT.*), Bertholet, Fried. Delitzsch, Kent. Cf. 1 Esd. iv. 24, 'where they sacrifice with continual fire.' Fire offerings included the burnt offerings, mainly those of animals (Lev. i. 9, &c.), but also meal offerings (Lev. ii. 8, &c.), the sacred bread and frankincense (Lev. xxiv. 7, 9, &c.)

**the height . . . breadth thereof threescore cubits:** nothing is said about the length. Probably we should read 'length' for 'breadth'; in the Aramaic M. T. there is not much difference. Solomon's temple was sixty cubits long by twenty broad, and thirty high (see 1 Kings vi. 2). But this breadth did not include the chambers; adding the latter the breadth of Solomon's temple would be about sixty cubits (see *DB.* 'Temple,' p. 715$^a$). If we retain the word height and understand the figures to denote actual measurement, then we must take the height of sixty cubits to refer to the porch and not to the house. In 2 Chron. iii. 4 it is said that the porch of Solomon's temple was 120 cubits high, which would make it more like a tower than a porch. Josephus, following 2 Chron. iii. 4 and the present passage, says that the porch of Solomon's temple was twice as high as that of Zerubbabel[1], but this writer is never critical, and, when numbers are concerned, seldom to be trusted. It must be admitted that these figures constitute a difficulty. Perhaps we should add the length 60 cubits, and understand the edict to denote the utmost limits to which the building could be carried—60 cubits every way[2].

We need not be surprised at the interest taken by Cyrus in the dimensions of the Temple; the Persian kings controlled the religious as well as other affairs of their people.

**4.** The text is probably greatly shortened, but the meaning seems to be that bounding the outer court (there was but one

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[1] *Antiq.* xv. 11. 1.

[2] Sayce thinks that nothing is said about length because the Semitic Temple was proportionately longer than it was broad.

of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the
king's house: and also let the gold and silver vessels of 5
the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out
of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto
Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple
which is at Jerusalem, every one to its place, and thou
shalt put them in the house of God. Now therefore, 6
Tattenai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-bozenai,
and [a] your companions the Apharsachites, which are

[a] Aram. *their*.

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court in Solomon's temple) of the Temple there was a wall made of three layers of stone, having on the top a layer of cedar planks, gable-shaped, to allow the water to escape. See *DB.* 'Temple,' 702ª.

**a row of new timber**: read (with LXX, Bertholet, Siegfried, Kent) 'one row of timber': the Aramaic for 'new' and 'one' are almost identical.

**the king's house**: i.e. the royal treasure house. See on v. 17. What is meant here, however, is that part of the royal revenue which came from the taxes of various kinds (see iv. 13, 20, vii. 24) paid in Transpotamia (see ver. 8). According to ii. 68 (see on and cf. Neh. vii. 70) some of the heads of fathers' houses gave to 'the house of God to restore it,' i.e. perhaps towards restoring the cultus or worship (sacrifices, &c.) The payment promised by Cyrus must have ceased or Tattenai and his companions would have known about it.

**5.** The M.T. seems corrupt, as is suggested by the changes in the number and person of the Aramaic verbs, yet the general sense is clear.

**vessels**: see i. 7.

**and thou shalt,** &c.: the sudden change of persons is striking; if the text is retained, Sheshbazzar must be the person addressed (see i. 11). We have probably only an epitome of what the compiler had before him, and it seems not well made.

**6–12.** *Darius commands that the Jews be allowed to go on with the building, and that financial help be accorded them.*

The transition from ver. 5 to ver. 6 is abrupt. In the original document some such words as the following must have stood: 'Finding that Cyrus had so decreed, and wishing to carry out the king's undertaking, Darius spoke thus to his Transpotamian rulers.'

**6. Tattenai . . . Shethar-bozenai**: see on v. 3.

**Apharsachites**: render 'Persian (officials).' See on iv. 9 and on v. 6.

7 beyond the river, be ye far from thence: let the work
of this house of God alone; let the governor of the
Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house o
8 God in its place. Moreover I make a decree what y
shall do to these elders of the Jews for the building o
this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the
tribute beyond the river, expenses be given with all dili
9 gence unto these men, that they be not hindered. An
that which they have need of, both young bullocks, an

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**beyond the river:** render 'in Transpotamia'; the expressio is a proper name. See on iv. 10.

**be ye far from thence:** i. e. hold your hands back from Jerusalem: do not hinder the work the Jews are doing at Jerusalem

**7.** Here Zerubbabel and the elders join in directing the work In fact he is an elder (see on v. 2). Siegfried, Bertholet, &c. omit 'the governor of the Jews and' from this verse. See verse 8, 14, where 'elders' alone occurs.

**8.** The Persian king undertakes to provide the money, but th Jews must see to the work.

**goods:** the Aramaic word occurs also in vii. 26, and mean 'wealth, possessions.' Its sense here is explained by the wor **tribute.** See on ver. 4.

**beyond the river:** see on iv. 10.

**with all diligence.** The same word is rendered in v. 8 (se on) and in ver. 12 'with diligence.'

**that they be not hindered:** this rendering, following, th Vulg. and depending on the use of the same verb in iv. 21 (c iv. 23), is that of Keil, Oettli, &c. We should, however, probabl render with Bertheau, &c., 'So that there be no delay': what i commanded is urgent and must be attended at once.

**9.** The Jews are to be helped not only in the building, but als in obtaining the materials for sacrifice.

The materials for three kinds of sacrifice are mentioned.

(1) Burnt offerings: bullocks (see below), rams, lambs (se ver. 17 and vii. 17. (2) Oblations, or vegetable (meal) offering wheat (including oil and salt), see below. (3) Drink offering, win The first kind were always accompanied by the other two i post-exilic times: see Num. xxviii f. and cf. the ancient concep tion of sacrifice as a social meal (flesh, vegetables, and wine).

**young bullocks:** render 'oxen.' The word rendered **youn** (not found in v. 17) means literally 'sons of,' and in Semit in such cases is commonly, as here, not to be translated. Thu 'sons of men' (Ps. cvii. 8, see on in *Century Bible*) means simpl

ms, and lambs, for burnt offerings to the God of
eaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the word
f the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them
ay by day without fail: that they may offer sacrifices of 10
weet savour unto the God of heaven, and pray for the
fe of the king, and of his sons. Also I have made a 11
ecree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let a beam be
ulled out from his house, and let him be lifted up and

men': see on ii. 41. The noun translated 'bullocks' is that hich in its Hebrew form (*shōr*) is translated 'ox,' but which means eally a head of cattle, a bull or a cow.

For the law see Lev. iv. 14, where translate 'bull' or 'bullock,' hich latter has come to have the same meaning.

**the God of heaven:** so ver. 10, i. 2, v. 11 f., vii. 12, 23; and he Sachau Aramaic Papyri, i. 2, 22 f. and iii. 3 f.

**wheat:** for making the fine flour required in the meal offerng: see Lev. ii. 1.

**salt:** used for seasoning the offering: see Lev. ii. 13.

**wine:** for the drink offering or libation: see Ex. xxix. 40; ev. xxiii. 13; Joel i. 9.

**oil:** to mix with the fine flour: see Lev. ii. 1 ff. Siegfried hinks the oil was poured forth as a libation, see Gen. xxviii. 18, xxv. 14. But wine is here the drink offering.

**without fail:** Aramaic 'without ceasing,' i.e. 'without ntermission.'

**10. that they may offer:** render 'that they may keep on offering.'

**sacrifices of sweet savour:** one word in the Aramaic, what s soothing, pleasing to the smell: see Gen. viii. 21. We have he full phrase in the Hebrew of Lev. i. 9, lit. 'an odour of what s tranquillizing to Yahweh.' After the exile incense was urnt on the incense-altar, and some think this is here referred to.

**and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons:** see Jer. xix. 7. Similarly at a later time the Jews prayed for the Roman mperor (Philo, *Legat. ad Gaium*, § 45). See further i. 10–12; Macc. vii. 33, xii. 11; 2 Macc. iii. 35, xiii. 23, cf. the Sachau ramaic Papyri, i. 2 f., 26–28.

**11. alter:** i.e. act contrary to the law, not change it: cf. Dan. ii. 28. Perhaps we should with 1 Esdras read 'transgress' (*'abar*).

**let a beam,** &c.: the punishment meant is that of impalement, living body being spiked *per anum* on a pointed pole: see Num. xv. 4; 2 Sam. xxi. 6, 9, 13, and the note on Esther ii. 23. Darius mpaled 3,000 Babylonians when he took the city[1]. This mode of

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[1] Her. iii. 159.

fastened thereon ; and let his house be made a dung
12 hill for this : and the God that hath caused his name t
dwell there overthrow all kings and peoples, that shal
put forth their hand to alter *the same*, to destroy thi
house of God which is at Jerusalem. I Darius hav
made a decree ; let it be done with all diligence.
13 Then Tattenai, the governor beyond the river, Shetha
bozenai, and their companions, [a] because that Darius th
14 king had sent, did accordingly with all diligence. An
the elders of the Jews builded and prospered, throug

[a] Or, *because of that which &c.*

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punishment is frequently represented in the bas-reliefs of th Assyrians [1], and existed in Africa at least as late as A.D. 1867 Crucifixion (a Roman custom) does not seem to have had vogu among any Oriental people. In Esther ix. 14 Haman's sons wer impaled after they had been put to death (verses 7–10), see below It must be remembered that stoning was the capital punishmer among the Hebrews (Lev. xxiv. 14). The bodies of persons previously put to death were impaled as a warning (see Deut. xx 22 ; Joshua x. 29 ; 1 Sam. xxxi. 9 f. ; 2 Sam. iv. 12). Winckler thinks that only dead persons were impaled : but cf. Num. xxv. where death by impalement seems implied.

**a dunghill :** see Dan. ii. 5 ; cf. 2 Kings x. 27. The punishment may seem unreasonably severe, but the Romans impose a penalty no less rigorous for crossing the Temple precincts Jerusalem, even when the offender happened to be a Roma citizen. See Meyer, *Entstehung*, 51 f.

**12. the God that hath caused his name to dwell there :** Deuteronomic phrase (see Deut. xii. 11, xiv. 22). Why shoul the king or his principal secretary not be acquainted with th phraseology and even with the recent literature of the Jews?

**alter :** see on ver. 11.

**with all diligence :** see on v. 8 and ver. 8.

13–18. *Completion and dedication of the Temple.*

13–15. *Completion of the Temple.*

**13. Tattenai, Shethar-bozenai :** see on v. 3.

**beyond the river :** see on iv. 10.

**because that,** &c. : render 'did exactly according to th command which Darius the king had sent.'

**14. elders :** see on v. 2.

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[1] See *The Bronze Gates of Balawat* (850 B.C.), part iv. [2] Zöckle *The Cross of Christ*, p. 62 f. [3] *Die Gesetze Hammurabi*, p. 4

he prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah
he son of Iddo. And they builded and finished it,
ccording to the commandment of the God of Israel,
nd according to the decree of Cyrus, and Darius, and
rtaxerxes king of Persia. And this house was finished 15
n the third day of the month Adar, which was in the
ixth year of the reign of Darius the king. And the 16
hildren of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the
est of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication

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**through the prophesying of Haggai . . . and Zechariah**: ccording to v. 1 these prophets caused the Jews to set about the uilding of the Temple. Here we are told that they remained alongide the builders urging and encouraging them to go on with the work. We have no record of the words uttered by these prophets in the atter part of the four (ver. 15) years covered by the Temple building, either have we of much which other prophets (Isaiah, &c.) said.

**Artaxerxes**: the clause containing this name is an obvious nterpolation. This king reigned from 465 to 423, and could have ad nothing to do with the rebuilding of the Temple completed in 15. The addition is due probably to the marginal note of an gnorant transcriber or to the influence of iv. 7 f. (see on), regarded s part of the account of the building of the Temple. Josephus as in this connexion the name Cambyses[1], which is yet more nlikely to be correct. Here the Jewish historian departs from is great source, 1 Esdras, which throughout this history is very onfused and confusing.

**15. Adar**: the twelfth month = our February-March: see on x. , 17. According to the present verse the Temple was completed on he third day of Adar in the year 515. 1 Esd. xii. 5, however, followed y Josephus[2], has the twenty-third day, and Bertholet adopts this, olding that in the Hebrew the numeral 20 has fallen out.

16-18. *Dedication of the Temple.* Bertholet thinks that the Chronicler here resumes his narrative. Instead of the Jews and heir elders we have now Israel, priests, &c. We have here, however, to do with a religious function, and one might expect functionaries peculiarly religious to appear on the scene. Besides, where else does the Chronicler write in Aramaic? Assuming the existence of Temple records, they would be of different dates and styles.

**16. children of Israel**: render 'Israelites,' and see on ii. 41.

**children of the captivity**: render 'Exiles': see on iv. 1.

**the dedication**: we must not think here of the Feast of

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[1] *Antiq.* xi. 4. 4.

[2] *Ibid.* xi. 4. 7.

17 of this house of God with joy. And they offered at th
dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, tw
hundred rams, four hundred lambs ; and for a sin offer
ing for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to th
18 number of the tribes of Israel. And they set the priest

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Dedication established about 165 B.C. to commemorate the purification and re-dedication of the Temple after its pollution by th Syrians. This latter is kept by Jews in our own time, and is stil known by the Hebrew word (*khanukkah*) employed here : se Num. vii. 7, and on Neh. xii. 37.

**with joy :** in the LXX Psalms cxxxviii, cxlvi–cxlviii are in th title connected with the names of Haggai and Zechariah, probabl owing to an ancient tradition that these psalms were composed o the present occasion. They are all of them psalms of thanksgiving and joy.

**17. And they offered,** &c. Compare with the much large number of animals offered at the dedication of Solomon's temple 1 Kings viii. 5, 63.

**for a sin offering,** &c.: the practice here, understanding th sacrifice to be for the sin of the congregation, differs from th law in Lev. iv. 13 ff., and from that in Num. xv. 22 ff. Here (s viii. 35) twelve he-goats : in the latter passage (ver. 24) a bull (o bullock) is to be offered as a burnt offering and a he-goat as a si offering. In Lev. iv. 14 one bull (or bullock) is required for th sin offering, but there is not a word about an accompanying burn offering. These divergences can be explained only as characteristics of different periods. See Bertholet on Lev. iv, and Gray o Num. xv. 22 ff.

**sin offering :** a sacrifice first mentioned in Ezek. xl. 39, an forming an important part of the P code. It involved the acknowledgement of sin and the need of Divine favour.

**18.** For details of divisions of priests and courses of Levites se 1 Chron. xxiii–xxvi, where the word translated in this vers **courses** is (in its Heb. form) used of the sub-divisions of Levite and priests. Except in the present verse and in 1 and 2 Chronicle the word does not occur in this sense in the O. T. The Pentateuch is, therefore, silent about these courses unless they are implied in Num. iii, vii. Our books of Chronicles belong in thei present form to about 300 B.C., but the incidents they record ar of course older, and so are the sources used. We may owe thi verse and even (so Bertholet) this whole section (verses 16–18) t the Chronicler, but it is not at all unlikely that we have in th priestly divisions and the Levitical courses the beginnings of th more elaborate sub-divisions. The word rendered **division**

ı their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the
ervice of God, which is at Jerusalem ; as it is written in
ıe book of Moses.

T And the children of the captivity kept the passover 19
pon the fourteenth *day* of the first month. For the 20
riests and the Levites had purified themselves [a] together ;
ll of them were pure : and they killed the passover for

[a] Heb. *as one.*

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ccurs (in its Heb. form) but once in Chronicles (2 Chron. xxxv.
), and not then as here of priests, but of the Levites.

After courses 1 Esd. vii. 7 adds : 'likewise the porters at each
loor.'

**as it is written in the book of Moses :** see on iii. 2. Ac-
ording to 1 Chron. xxiii ff., the **divisions** and **courses** are due
o David : this represents a late tradition and nothing more.

With ver. 18 the Aramaic section, iv. 8–vi. 18, comes to an
nd, the Hebrew being resumed in ver. 19.

vi. 19–22. *Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread.*

The Temple is built and the priesthood organized ; a beginning is now made in the observance of the sacred feasts. This is xactly what might have been expected, for no one doubts that the hree great feasts had been observed in the land before the destruction of the Temple.

**19.** See Exod. xiii. 6 ; Lev. xxiii. 5 (both P).

**the children of the captivity :** see on iv. 1 ; render '(returned) exiles.'

**kept the passover :** on the observances of the feasts actually recorded in Ezra-Nehemiah, &c., see p. 10.

**first month :** i. e. Nisan. Before the exile the year began in the autumn with the month subsequently and still called Tishri, Nisan being the seventh month. Soon after the exile the Assyrian-Babylonian names and the habit of beginning the year in the spring (Nisan) became general. At a later time, however, the older custom, still in vogue, of beginning the year with Tishri in the autumn came in.

**20. For,** &c. : the Passover was now observed because the priests and Levites had purified themselves. See 2 Chron. xxxv. 6.

According to the ancient law (Exod. xii. 21–27) the Passover was a domestic rite at which the head of the house officiated. The Deuteronomic code (Deut. xvi. 1–8 ; cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 23) required that this feast should be kept at the sanctuary, the priests officiating. The P code (Exod. xii. 1–20) made the feast once more domestic and lay, and it is this law which modern Jews follow,

all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the
21 priests, and for themselves. And the children of Israel
which were come again out of the captivity, and all such
as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness
of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD, the God of
22 Israel, did eat, and kept the feast of unleavened bread
seven days with joy: for the LORD had made them
joyful, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria
unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the
house of God, the God of Israel.

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without, however, the prescribed sacrifice, though a semblance of the paschal lamb is still kept up in the *Keppurah*. In the present instance the Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread are combined (not so in JE); the first is kept apparently at the Central Sanctuary, Levites officiating. The P code does not appear to have become as yet operative, even if it existed: see p. 10.

**children of the captivity:** see on iv. 1. The expression seems here to denote the lay members of the community.

**21. children of Israel:** render 'Israelites.' See on ii. 41 and iv. 1.

**and all such,** &c.: not heathen proselytes as some hold (see Meyer, *Entstehung*, &c., p. 129 f.), but home-staying Jews who had married non-Jewish wives and proved otherwise unfaithful to the religion of their fathers, but who now returned to the old faith, abandoning their heathen wives (see x. 11). Some recent critics (Bertholet, Torrey, Kent, &c.) hold that such a putting away of heathen wives took place first not in 515 B.C., as the present narrative implies, but in the time of Ezra (say 458 B.C.): see ix. 1, x. 11; Neh. x. 29. The Chronicler is thought to have antedated this reforming movement. Surely, however, there must have been enough remembrance of the teaching of Deuteronomy (see on x. 1) to suggest the desirability of such a step.

**to seek the LORD:** see on iv. 2.

**22. the feast of unleavened bread:** originally quite distinct from the Passover: see Exod. xxxiii. 15. In the D code they appear to be regarded as one. See Deut. xvi. 2 f.

**the king of Assyria:** i.e. Darius I, so called because his dominions included Assyria. Perhaps the phrase has in it an implied compliment to the Persian king thus described. See Neh. xiii. 6 where Artaxerxes I is called 'King of Babylon.'

Kings of Assyria in the strict sense had treated Israel in a very different way (see Isa. xxxvi–xxxix); what wonders had God wrought on behalf of His people! It is possible that Assyria apears instead of Persia (ver. 15) through a copyist's error, for as an independent power Assyria had long since passed away. We now, however, that Cyrus gloried in the title 'King of Babylon,' nd Artaxerxes is so called in Neh. xiii. 6.

### VII–X + Neh. vii. $73^{b}$–x. 39.

### SECOND PORTION OF THE BOOK. EZRA'S ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM AND WHAT HE DID THERE.

Between chaps. vi and vii there is a period of nearly sixty years, bout which the Bible is silent. Nor have we contemporary or ny other reliable records as to the condition or doings of the Jews uring these years. It was, however, in these apparently barren years that the priestly code was elaborated by the priests who had ot left Babylon, and that part at least of Isa. xl. ff. was composed nd put together—also in Babylon. It is singular that the latest ditors of Ezra-Nehemiah should jump over this space of time. Perhaps, indeed, in the original draft of the history this gap did ot exist. There must have been at one time state, temple, and other records dealing with the period, which however appear to have been lost quite early. Though little is told us in the present ection of the state of things when Ezra arrived, much may be gathered from what is said in Nehemiah of the condition of the ountry thirteen years later, when Nehemiah came to Jerusalem. Neh. v. 1–15 shows that Jerusalem was in a bad way. Capitalists cted unjustly and cruelly towards their debtors; the governors immediately before Nehemiah were extortionate and unsympathetic. Religiously matters were even worse. It seems evident that this description applies more or less for decades before Nehemiah eceived permission to act the reformer among his own people. t was no doubt a knowledge of the state of matters at and about erusalem that induced Ezra also to seek and obtain permission to go to Jerusalem to teach the law of God and to re-establish eligious institutions.

We read no more of Zerubbabel, and we have no certain information as to what became of him. Tradition has it that he returned to the Persian court, where he remained. It has not been proved, though it has been affirmed, that he accepted the rôle of Davidic king, and even that of Messiah. See on v. 2.

vii f. *Ezra's arrival at Jerusalem; incidents of the journey* 1 Esd. viii. 1–64 (66).

vii. 1–10 ‖ 1 Esd. viii. 1–7. *Introductory narrative giving in brief a summary of what follows in verses* 11–28. Perhaps originally verses 11–28 were written on a special parchment, to which verses 1–10 were attached as a docket or title.

7 [$T_E$] Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxe
king of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah
2 the son of Hilkiah, the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok
3 the son of Ahitub, the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah
4 the son of Meraioth, the son of Zerahiah, the son o
5 Uzzi, the son of Bukki, the son of Abishua, the son o
Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chie

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1. **Now after these things**: a phrase in common use in Heb (Gen. xv. 1, &c.), and meaning simply that what is going to b related took place subsequently to what has been related. I Semitic, as in the classical languages, paragraphs and sentence are linked by connecting particles and phrases, which in Englis would have no external mark of connexion.

**Artaxerxes**, i. e. Artaxerxes I, Longimanus (465-423). Othe opinions have been held and defended; see the larger commentaries. It is at all events clear that the Artaxerxes of Nehemia (see Neh. ii. 1) is the above king, since Nehemiah was governo of Judah in the time of the high-priest Eliashib, grandson c Joshua, high-priest in 520 (Neh. iii. 1, xii. 16): Artaxerxes I Mnemon (404-359), lived at too late a time to make this possible That the compiler and final editor of Ezra-Nehemiah took thi Artaxerxes to be Longimanus seems almost certain, for he woul otherwise have differentiated in some way the king mentioned i this verse. See on Neh. ii. 1.

From $1^b$ to the end of ver. 5 we have the genealogy of Ezra But the list is obviously a greatly curtailed one, for only fiftee individuals are mentioned in the line of descent from Aaron t Ezra, i. e. for the space of some 900 or 1,000 years. Probabl *ben* (= 'son') is to be understood in the sense of 'descendant Ezra cannot in the ordinary sense be the **son of Seraiah,** sinc the latter died about 586 B. C. according to 2 Kings xxv. 18-21 though of course another person of the same name might hav lived a century or so later. See on v. 1, viii. 2, and Neh. xii. 2 The name **Ezra** (= 'help') as it stands, an Aramaic form, is probabl a contraction of *Ezaryahu* '(one whom) Yahweh helps.' Cf. Nehemiah = '(one whom) Yahweh comforts,' and Isaiah (Heb. *Yesha'yahu*) = '(one whom) Yahweh delivers.' The name is borne b others, see Neh. xii. 1, 13, 33.

5. **Aaron the chief priest**: the purpose of the genealogy wa to show Ezra's descent from Aaron. In the older sources (J, E, D Aaron is Moses' spokesman (Exod. iv. 14, xxiv. 1) and a pries (Deut. x. 6, J, E, not D).

The words rendered **chief priest** mean literally the 'hea

riest : this Ezra went up from Babylon ; and he was 6
ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the LORD, the
od of Israel, had given : and the king granted him all
is request, according to the hand of the LORD his God
pon him. And there went up some of the children of 7
srael, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the
ngers, and the porters, and the Nethinim, unto Jeru-
ilem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king. And 8

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riest,' and occur in 2 Sam. xv. 27 (Wellhausen rejects them here), Kings xxv. 18 (=Jer. lii. 24), and some half-dozen times in Chronicles. In the P code the expression is 'the great priest,' .VV 'the high priest' : see Lev. xxi. 10 ; Num. xxxv. 25, 28, &c. ı earlier times he is called simply 'the priest' : see 2 Kings xi. f. Though it is in post-exilic times that the high-priest became ı important functionary, there is abundance of evidence that such ı official existed before the exile : see *DB.* iv. 73, 79 ff. (Bau-issin). Yet it is singular that in Ezekiel's programme of religious stitutions and offices (Ezek. xl–xlvi) the high-priesthood finds no lace, probably because it had not yet become a vital part of the clesiastical system.

6–10. *The return of Ezra and his companions.*

**6. went up,** i. e. to Jerusalem. See ver. 7, ii. 1, and viii. 1.

**ready :** lit. 'quick.'

**scribe :** originally a secular official, state secretary ; see Sam. viii. 17, xx. 35 ; 1 Kings iv. 3 ; 2 Kings xviii. 18, xxii. , &c. In the beginning of the Deuteronomic period, when ırough the finding of the book of the law in the Temple the ritten word acquired a fresh importance, the term came to be sed for one who studied and taught as well as copied the law. hough the sense 'writer' is the oldest, that of 'interpreter' be-ame more and more its principal meaning. In post-exilic times ıe scribes grew to be a very important section of the people, such s they were in our Lord's day.

**the law of Moses :** see on iii. 2. The reference is, however, ere especially to the law which Ezra had brought with him om Babylon (ver. 14) : see p. 8 ff.

**according to the hand,** &c. : the phrase = 'according to ahweh's helpfulness towards him,' and is characteristic of the zra memoirs from which the present narrative is extracted. See erses 9, 28 ; viii. 18, 22, 31 ; and also Neh. ii. 8, 18. Cf. 'the ye of their God,' v. 5, and see 2 Chron. xxx. 12.

**7.** For the classes here mentioned see ii. 36 ff.

**in the seventh year of Artaxerxes : i. e.** in 458.

he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was i
9 the seventh year of the king. For upon the first *da*
of the first month [a] began he to go up from Babylon
and on the first *day* of the fifth month came he t
Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upo
10 him. For Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of th

[a] Heb. *that was the foundation of the going up.*

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**8. the fifth month:** i.e. Ab (Abib), corresponding to our Jul or August.

Since Nehemiah arrived in the twentieth year of this kin (Neh. ii. 1), there was a space of thirteen years between the tw arrivals (458–445).

Wellhausen thinks that Ezra arrived in the twenty-seventh yea (i.e. 427), the number twenty having fallen out. Van Hoonacke who agrees with Kosters in making Ezra's visit subsequent to Nehemiah's, says Artaxerxes II, Mnemon (404–359), is the king meant i ver. 7; see on ver. 7. Winckler, in different parts of the sam volume (*Altor. Forschungen*, ii. 222, 242), argues inconsistently fo two different dates, viz. in the reigns of Cambyses and Darius.

**9. began:** it is better to vocalize the Heb. as in Esther i. (' so the king *had appointed*,' &c.), and to translate 'decided' o 'arranged.' Though the journey was decided upon on the firs day of the first month it was not actually begun before eleven days later: see viii. 32. The time taken for the journey would b about 108 days, reckoning from the twelfth day of Nisan (viii. 31 to the first day of Ab. The distance from Babylon to Jerusalem in a straight line is about 300 miles. But travelling in the Eas especially in those times, was difficult as well as dangerous; and th Jews now had much valuable baggage to carry and to care abou Besides, to avoid the desert, Ezra's caravan had to make a detou by Carchemish. Ryle calculates that the actual distance covere was fully 900 miles. The arrival would take place about Augu (Ab) in the year 458. See Ryle (*in loco*) and Meyer, *Entstehung*, 23

**10.** Why did Ezra set about that long journey? We have th answer in this verse.

**to seek:** see on iv. 2. Two Hebrew words are translate 'seek' in the English Bible. The one (*darash*) = 'to seek know ledge,' 'to search,' and is cognate with *midrash* (an investigatio of the sense of Scripture). The other (*biqqesh*) = 'to seek for wh is lost.' It is the first that is used here and in iv. 2, and vi. 2 Both verbs occur in Ps. cv. 4 (see on in *Century Bible*).

Here the meaning seems to be to recognize Yahweh's law an that of no other god. The next clause (to act according to th law then recognized) supports this interpretation.

ORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and
dgements.
[T$_{EA}$] Now this is the copy of the letter that the king 11
rtaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, even the
ribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD,
d of his statutes to Israel. [a] Artaxerxes, king of kings, 12
nto Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of
eaven, perfect and so forth. I make a decree, that all 13

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[a] Ch. vii. 12-26 is in Aramaic.

**to teach**: this was the special function of the *sopher* or scribe: e on ver. 5.

11-26 (‖ 1 Esd. viii. 8-24). *The decree of Artaxerxes authoring Ezra to return and reorganize Judaism.*

**11.** *Introductory* (Hebrew).

**Now**: the connecting particle (see on ver. 1), not the time-verb 'now.'

**copy**: see on iv. 11.

**letter**: see on iv. 7.

**Ezra the priest**: see genealogy, verses 1-5. He is so called x. 10, 16, Neh. viii. 2, and also in the title to Ezra and 1 Esdras the *Luc.* In later times and perhaps here 'the priest' = 'the gh-priest': so Neh. xiii. 4, 1 Chron. xvi. 39, and often in P.

**the scribe**: see on ver. 6. He is so called in Neh. viii. 4, 13, i. 36. The two titles 'the priest' and 'the scribe' are found gether not only here but also in verses 12, 21, Neh. viii. 9, i. 26.

12-26. *Contents of the King's Letter* (Aramaic).

**12. king of kings**: Darius is so described in the Gadatas scription. See p. 102.

**God of heaven**: see on i. 2.

**perfect**: the Aramaic word has the force of our '&c.' rientals (Arabs, &c.) are in the habit, when addressing persons distinction, of heaping up epithets to an extent that is hardly edible to Western minds. Even our German neighbours will rite on an envelope: 'To the high born, learned, and very noured A.B.C.' After **scribe** the word rendered **perfect** (lit. hat is to be completed) means: 'and the other titles of respect.' Rabbinical Heb. a form of this word with the conjunction = nd' prefixed is used (often abbreviated) as our '&c.'

**and so forth**: render (wrote) 'as follows': see on iv. 10.

**13. I make a decree**: see iv. 19, vi. 8, 11.

**all they**, &c.: see i. 3.

they of the people of Israel, and their priests and th
Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own fre
14 will to go to Jerusalem, go with thee. Forasmuch a
thou art sent [a] of the king and his seven counsellors, t
inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according t
15 the law of thy God which is in thine hand; and to carr
the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellor
have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habita
16 tion is in Jerusalem, and all the silver and gold that tho

[a] Aram. *from before the king.*

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**with thee:** Ezra had to be director of the work.

14-16. Ezra was commissioned (1) to make inquiries about th state of Judah and Jerusalem (ver. 14); (2) to carry with him th gifts of the king and his counsellors and other contributions.

**14. seven counsellors:** according to Herodotus (iii. 84) th heads of the seven principal families in Persia formed a kind privy council to advise the king in affairs of moment. Eac of these had the privilege of access to the king. See Esther i. 1. Seven among the Persians, as among the Hebrews, was a sacre number: cf. the heavenly court consisting of Ahuramazda and th six Amesha spentas, or, according to another conception, th seven Amesha spentas, the Supreme Good Spirit named being on The Divine court formed perhaps the pattern for the human.

**Judah and Jerusalem:** see on v. 1.

**law . . . hand:** the reference must be to some code freshl brought by Ezra from Babylon and previously unknown to Jev residing already in Judah. That this code concerned itself almos if not exclusively, with the religious side of the nation's life go without saying, but as to what exactly it contained has be matter of much discussion, and must remain so with our prese data. That it did not coincide with our Pentateuch or with th Priestly Code is, however, among the things which cannot doubted. See p. 8 ff.

15 f. The contributions towards the Temple and its servic which Ezra was to take with him were to be of three kinds: ( The gold and silver given by the king and his (seven) counsellor (2) the gifts of non-Jewish, and (3) of Jewish residents in Bab lon. Cf. the decree of Cyrus to restore the gold and silver vesse removed from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar: see on i. 6-11 a cf. v. 14 and vi. 5. Ezra showed no scruple in accepting t financial help of Gentiles.

halt find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill
offering of the people, and of the priests, offering will-
ngly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem;
herefore thou shalt with all diligence buy with this 17
money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meal offerings
and their drink offerings, and shalt offer them upon the
altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem.
And whatsoever shall seem good to thee and to thy 18
brethren to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that
do ye after the will of your God. And the vessels that 19
are given thee for the service of the house of thy God,
deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem. And whatso- 20
ever more shall be needful for the house of thy God,
which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow it out
of the king's treasure house. And I, even I Artaxerxes 21

---

**16. offering willingly,** &c.: that the king in writing to Jews about religious affairs should adopt this religious phraseology is exactly what might have been expected from a Persian monarch of the time: see on vi. 12.

17 f. The money thus obtained was to be used in providing the material for sacrifice (ver. 17; cf. Joel i. 8–12) and in meeting other needs (ver. 18).

**17.** On the species of sacrifices here enumerated see on vi. 9 and also on vi. 17.

**18. the will of your God:** as revealed in the law which Ezra was to bring with him: see p. 8 ff.

**19. the vessels,** &c.: not those granted by Cyrus (i. 7), but those enumerated in viii. 25–27.

**deliver:** Schultz, Siegfried, Bertholet, and others render 'deliver completely,' 'hand over wholly.' The usage in Syriac supports this. The extent of the gift is stated in ver. 22.

**the God of Jerusalem:** a strange and unparalleled expression. Probably we should read with Guthe (*SBOT.*) 'the God of Israel who is at Jerusalem,' or with *Luc.*, 'thy God who is at Jerusalem.'

**20. the king's treasure house:** i. e. the treasury of the satrap of Transpotamia, where the taxes collected in the satrapy were kept until they were transmitted to the principal royal fiscus at Susa.

the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of
22 you, it be done with all diligence, unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred [a] measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of
23 oil, and salt without prescribing how much. Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done exactly for the house of the God of heaven; for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and

[a] Aram. *cors*.

---

**21. treasurers:** the treasurers of the sub-satrapies of Transpotamia: see on iv. 8. These would severally have charge of the taxes until they were transferred to the principal treasury of the province, whence in due time they were taken to Susa, local expenses, and in this case the gifts to the Jews, being in all cases deducted and accounted for.

**God of heaven:** see on i. 2.

**with all diligence:** see on v. 8 and vi. 8.

**22.** The utmost limit of the help which Ezra may receive from the public purse.

**hundred talents of silver:** slightly over £35,000, according to Meyer. A Persian talent weighed, according to Benzinger (*Arch.*(2), 201), about 34,000 kilogrammes (see on viii. 26). Meyer (*Entstehung*, 69 n.) says that sums almost fabulously large were preserved in the Persian exchequer.

**an hundred measures** (Aram. 'corin') **of wheat:** about 1,000 bushels.

**an hundred baths of wine:** about 800 gallons.

**salt** being very plentiful, and therefore cheap, could be obtained in any quantity. On the place of **salt** in the sacrificial system see on vi. 9.

**23.** Note the terms of respect with which Artaxerxes speaks of the Jewish God, and see on i. 2.

**exactly:** the original word is Persian and should probably (with Marquart, Andreas, &c.) be translated 'promptly.'

**for why,** &c.: render, 'that there be no anger (on the part of Yahweh) to the detriment of the kingdom of the king and his sons.'

**for why,** &c.: the words may and here should be rendered, as above, 'lest,' &c.

**wrath:** just as Artaxerxes feared to incur the anger of Yahweh, the national God of Israel, so the Israelites themselves

is sons? Also we certify you, that touching any of the 24
riests and Levites, the singers, porters, Nethinim, or
ervants of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to
npose tribute, custom, or toll, upon them. And thou, 25
zra, after the wisdom of thy God that is in thine hand,
ppoint magistrates and judges, which may judge all the
eople that are beyond the river, all such as know the
aws of thy God; and teach ye him that knoweth them
ot. And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and 26
he law of the king, let judgement be executed upon him

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ad a great fear of offending Chemosh, the national deity of Moab. ee 2 Kings iii. 27. Perhaps to the Persian king, as a Mazdaist, ahweh was his own supreme deity (Ahuramazda) as he revealed imself to the Jews.

**24.** *Temple officials are not to be taxed.*

**priests . . . Nethinim:** see on ii. 36 ff.

**or servants,** &c.: render, 'even (all) the servants of,' &c. he words are a summing up of the classes mentioned. The same ram. (and Heb.) word (*waw*) stands for 'and,' 'or,' 'even,' &c.

**tribute,** &c.: see on iv. 13. According to the Gadatas nscription (see on vi. 1-12) the priests of Apollo were to be xempted from paying taxes, just as here the priests, &c., are xempted. Yet some think that in the present case it is unlikely. Vhy?

**25. after the wisdom,** &c.: i.e. 'according to thy God's aw,' &c. See on ver. 14. What, if any, is the difference between he magistrates and judges whom Ezra was to appoint over the ews of Transpotamia? Meyer says that two synonyms are used or the sake of emphasis, and Bertholet fails to see any difference f meaning between the two words. Perhaps the word translated **udges** (*shapheṭīn*) has in it here something of its original meanng 'rulers.' Probably, however, it is a marginal gloss.

**judge:** the verb here is cognate with the word rendered magistrates,' a reason for regarding the two classes noticed above s having identical functions. It is evident from the words which ollow that these officials were to have jurisdiction over the Jews lone of Transpotamia.

**26. the law of thy God, and . . . of the king:** so far as the ews of the province were concerned the king, by adopting the ewish code, made it his own, so that disobedience towards zra's new law exposed the individual guilty of it to the penalties nnexed to infringement of Persian law.

with all diligence, whether it be unto death, or to [a] banish
ment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.
27 [E] Blessed be the LORD, the God of our fathers, whic
hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautif
28 the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem; and hat
extended mercy unto me before the king, and his cour
sellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And
was strengthened according to the hand of the LORD m
God upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chi
men to go up with me.

---

[a] Aram. *rooting out.*

**banishment:** Aram. 'uprooting.' The cognate verb
Ps. lii. 5 is rendered 'and root thee (out of the land of the living'
The sense here is probably 'excommunication,' not 'banis
ment': see x. 8.

27 f. *Ezra's Doxology* (Hebrew). This is perhaps a Psalm con
posed by Ezra to be sung after the receipt of the king's decre
It comes in rather abruptly after ver. 26. Originally there wer
it seems likely, some words of introduction to verses 27 f., such
'And Ezra spake these words after he had received the royal decre

**27. God of our fathers:** the God who helped our fathers h
shown Himself our Helper: see viii. 28, x. 11; 1 Chron. xxix. 1
2 Chron. xx. 6. Cf. Acts iii. 13, and Doddridge's hymn, 'O God
Bethel,' 'God of our fathers be the God of their succeeding race.'

**hath put . . . in the king's heart:** see Neh. ii. 12, vii.
1 Kings x. 24.

**to beautify:** the sense is to restore the Temple to the glo
which it had before its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar.
Sellin, Siegfried.

**28. mercy:** render, 'loving kindness'; the Aram. word has
it no implication of guilt. See 'Psalms,' vol. i, p. 360, *Century Bib*
For the phrase 'extend loving kindness' see ix. 9; Gen. xxxix. 2

**unto me:** the use of the first person in the Ezra memoi
begins here.

**his counsellors:** see on ver. 14.

## VIII. 1–14 (=1 Esd. viii. 28–40).

### LIST OF THOSE WHO RETURNED WITH EZRA.

For general remarks on the lists of Ezra-Nehemiah see Intr
to II and notes on the various sections and verses of th
chapter. In the present list the clerical element takes preceden

Now these are the heads of their fathers' *houses*, and 8
this is the genealogy of them that went up with me from
Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king. Of the 2
sons of Phinehas, Gershom: of the sons of Ithamar,
Daniel: of the sons of David, Hattush. Of the sons of 3

---

of the lay, the priests being named first (ver. 2), the lay clans afterwards (verses 3–14). It is so in x. 18 ff. and in Neh. x. 3 ff. But in Ezra ii and Neh. vii the lay clans are mentioned first. The difference may be due to the pre-eminence of the lay leaders in the first century after the return. The power of the priests grew rapidly after the introduction of Ezra's law, itself the work of the priestly school in Babylon.

The list in verses 1–14 has been shortened, and mistakes have evidently crept in; perhaps all this is to be ascribed to the ignorance or carelessness of copyists or to the imperfect state of the parchment and writing before them.

The following plan may be yet traced, and it is likely that in the original draft it was uniformly followed: (1) The name of the clan; (2) that of its chief; (3) the number belonging to the clan that returned with Ezra. Where the M.T. falls short, judged by this scheme, the defect can be generally made good from the LXX or 1 Esdras or both.

The sum total, according to the M.T., is 1,496; according to 1 Esdras it is 1,690. The discrepancy arises from the following differences in details: the Adin clan, Ezra (ver. 6) 50, 1 Esd. (ver. 32) 250; Shephatiah, Ezra (ver. 7) 80, 1 Esd. (ver. 34) 70; Joab, Ezra (ver. 9) 218, 1 Esd. (ver. 35) 212; Adonikam, Ezra (ver. 13) 60, 1 Esd. (ver. 39) 70. Correcting the M.T. by 1 Esdras as above, we obtain the number 1,692, as against the sum total of 1,690 in 1 Esdras.

**1. Now:** see on vii. 11.

**heads of their fathers' houses:** see on i. 5.

**the genealogy:** see on ii. 62.

**2.** The priestly clans are mentioned first, then the royal David clan. On the meaning of house or clan see p. 52 f.

**Phinehas:** son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron.

**Ithamar:** youngest son of Aaron: Exod. vi. 23; 1 Chron. v. 29.

**Gershom** and **Daniel** are heads of the Phinehas and Ithamar clans, and not the only priests in the company (see ver. 24). Ezra himself belonged to the Phinehas clan (see vii. 1–5).

**Daniel:** called Gamaliel (or Gamael?) in 1 Esd. 29. Daniel is the name in Neh. viii. 29. Perhaps the clan had two names.

**Hattush,** &c. Join with the next verse and render 'Hattush the son of Shecaniah.' So 1 Esd. viii. 29; cf. 1 Chron. iii. 22,

Shecaniah; of the sons of Parosh, Zechariah: and with
him were reckoned by genealogy of the males an hundred
4 and fifty. Of the sons of Pahath-moab, Eliehoenai the
son of Zerahiah; and with him two hundred males.
5 Of the sons of Shecaniah, the son of Jahaziel; and with
6 him three hundred males. And of the sons of Adin,
Ebed the son of Jonathan; and with him fifty males.
7 And of the sons of Elam, Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah;
8 and with him seventy males. And of the sons of Shephatiah,
Zebadiah the son of Michael; and with him four-
9 score males. Of the sons of Joab, Obadiah the son
of Jehiel; and with him two hundred and eighteen
10 males. And of the sons of Shelomith, the son of Josiphiah;
and with him an hundred and threescore males.
11 And of the sons of Bebai, Zechariah the son of Bebai;

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where this Hattush is grandson of Shecaniah. 'Son' often means grandson and descendant: see on vii. 1–5.

3–14. *The lay clans.* All these are represented in the list of those who returned with Zerubbabel in 537 (see ii. 2 ff.) with the exception of Shecaniah (ver. 5) and Shelomith (ver. 10), whose presence in this list as clans is due to textual corruption, see on verses 5 and 10.

The number of the lay clans is twelve, corresponding to the twelve tribes from which the nation was supposed to have sprung: see on ii. 2.

**3.** This verse must begin with **Of the sons of Parosh**: see on ver. 2.

**males**: in ch. ii and Neh. vii females are included in the reckoning.

**5.** Read and render, 'Of the sons of Zattu, Shecaniah the son of Jahaziel': so LXX (not *Luc.*), 1 Esd. viii. 32. Zattu is mentioned in ii. 8 and Neh. vii. 13, but Shecaniah occurs in no list as a clan.

**6. fifty**: 1 Esd. viii. 32 gives 250.

**8. fourscore**: in 1 Esd. viii. 34 it is 70.

**9. two hundred and eighteen**: 1 Esd. viii. 35 gives 212.

**10.** Read and render, 'And of the sons of Bani, Shelomith the son of Josiphiah.' So LXX and 1 Esd. viii. 36. *Luc.* has a conflate reading, 'And the son of Shelomith, Banais the son of Josiphiah.' We do not read elsewhere of a clan Shelomith, though of one Bani we read in ii. 10 and Neh. vii. 15 (Bennui).

and with him twenty and eight males. And of the 12
sons of Azgad, Johanan the son of Hakkatan; and with
him an hundred and ten males. And of the sons of 13
Adonikam, *that were* the last; and these are their
names, Eliphelet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah, and with them
threescore males. And of the sons of Bigvai, Uthai and 14
[a]Zabbud; and with them seventy males.

And I gathered them together to the river that 15
runneth to Ahava; and there we encamped three days:
and I viewed the people, and the priests, and found there

[a] Another reading is, *Zaccur*.

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13 f. In previous cases after the name of the clan (house) the head of it is mentioned. In ver. 13 three names are given instead of the usual one, and in ver. 14 two. Moreover, in ver. 13 there occurs a Hebrew word rendered in the E.VV. '*that were* the last,' but which, restoring to the Hebrew the article (found in *Luc.* and 1 Esd. viii. 39), is more accurately rendered 'those who came after.' The name of the head of the members of the clan that came with Ezra was unknown, but instead the historian gives the names of three successive heads belonging to later generations. The same word is probably to be understood in ver. 14, where two later heads are mentioned. Perhaps the Hebrew text is corrupt, or the word may have in this register a technical sense now lost.

The commonest view is that the elder branch of the clan arrived with Zerubbabel (ii. 13) and that now the younger comes with Ezra. But why are three heads mentioned here and nowhere else?

## 15–36. THE ASSEMBLING OF THE PARTY: THE JOURNEY: THE ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM (1 Esd. viii. 41–64 (66)).

### 15–20. *The assembly. Absence of Levites.*

**15. to the river that runneth to Ahava:** 'to the running river (i. e.) to Ahava'; probably in contrast to the stagnant canals about Babylon. Where this running river exactly was we have no means of knowing, though it must have been a branch of the Euphrates and in the vicinity of Babylon. That Ahava was a river appears from verses 21, 31. It is called 'Theras' in 1 Esd. viii. 41. The cognate Babylonian word (*nâru*) means also 'canal' which Sayce thinks must be meant here. The verb translated 'run' means lit. 'to come' or 'go.'

**I viewed:** cf. Neh. viii. 7.

**people:** i. e. the laity.

16 none of the sons of Levi. Then sent I for Eliezer, fo
Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, an
for Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and fo
Meshullam, chief men; also for Joiarib, and for Elna-
17 than, [a] which were teachers. And [b] I sent them forth unt
Iddo the chief at the place Casiphia; and I told them
what they should say unto [c] Iddo, *and* his brethren th

[a] Or, *which had understanding* [b] Another reading is, *I gav* *them commandment.* [c] The text as pointed has, *Iddo, his brother*

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**found there none of the sons of Levi**: see for the reaso general remarks on ii. 40–58. According to 1 Esd. viii. 42 an *Luc.* there were neither priests nor Levites, but the contex in Ezra (ver. 2, &c.) and in 1 Esd. (viii. 29, &c.) shows that priest were with Ezra from the beginning. The fact that there was at thi time as well as at the time of the first expedition under Zerubbabe and Jeshua a dearth of Levites is one of those 'undesigne coincidences' which support the veracity of Ezra ii and th present context. Had Ezra's work followed that of Nehemiah as v. Hoonacker, &c., hold, the same conditions are less likely t have presented themselves, the distance in time from Cyru being 80 and 140 years, or the two dates of Ezra's arrival.

**16. for**: omit in each case. The preposition (*l*) so translated is i Hebrew often and in Aramaic regularly used to introduce the accusative (see Ges.-Kautzsch(26) § 117 n.). Ezra sent Eliezer, Ariel, &c (v. 17), to Iddo, &c. So *Luc.*, Pesh., Vulg., and modern commentators. The LXX (not *Luc.*) and 1 Esdras agree with the E.VV.

**Elnathan**: the double mention of this name in the sam verse must be due to a copyist's error.

**teachers**: lit. 'those who caused to understand.' Dr. Ado Rosenzweig[1], followed hesitatingly by Bertholet, thinks that ther was in Babylon a class distinct from priests and Levites, whos special province it was to teach the law. But the fact that i almost every case this very word is used in describing the wor of the Levite goes far to show that no special class of the kin indicated existed. See Neh. viii. 7, 9; 1 Chron. xv. 22; xxv. 8 &c. Besides, if there were such a separate body of officials, wh have we no clear reference to it? The same word in Neh. viii. x. 29, means 'those who discern.'

**17. I sent**, &c.: render, 'I gave them a commission (or 'commandment') to Iddo, head over (the Jewish colony) at the plac Casiphia (a Jewish centre in Babylon); and I told them (li

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[1] *Das Jahrhundert nach dem babylon. Exile*, Berlin, 1885.

Nethinim, at the place Casiphia, that they should bring
nto us ministers for the house of our God. And accord- 18
ng to the good hand of our God upon us they brought
s [a] a man of discretion, of the sons of Mahli, the son of
evi, the son of Israel; and Sherebiah, with his sons and
is brethren, eighteen; and Hashabiah, and with him 19
eshaiah of the sons of Merari, his brethren and their
ons, twenty; and of the Nethinim, whom David and 20
he princes had given for the service of the Levites,

[a] Or, *Ishsechel*

---

put into their mouth,' cf. Exod. iv. 15) what they were to say o Iddo and his brethren the Levites and the Nethinim,' &c.

The Hebrew text must be changed, for as it stands it means to Iddo and his brother the Nethinim.' The changes to this rom the fuller text, implied in the above translation, could be asily made by a copyist, as a student of the original will see.

We do not know anything further than this verse tells us of his Iddo or of the Jewish settlement at Casiphia.

**ministers:** the word is general, and can include priests Num. iii. 6, &c.) as well as Levites, Nethinim, &c. The LXX not *Luc.*), misreading one Hebrew consonant, reads 'singers.'

**18. according to the good hand of our God:** see on vii. 6.

**a man of discretion:** read 'Ishsechel' as R. Vm., a proper ame parallel to Sherebiah. For a similar proper name see Sam. x. 6, Ish-tob (A. V.), not 'men of Tob' as R. V. (see Kittel nd Budde on). Why call an unnamed Levite 'a discreet man'? Vere the other Levites 'indiscreet'?

**Mahli** was son of Merari (Exod. vi. 16, 19) and therefore randson of Levi. For 'son' (*ben*) = descendant see on vii. 1-5.

**19. with him:** we have here simply the sign of the accusa- ive (they brought . . . Jeshaiah), with the wrong vowels inserted. o LXX (not *Luc.*), 1 Esdras, Guthe, Bertholet.

**his** (brethren): read 'their': so 1 Esd. (*Luc.*) viii. 47, Guthe, ertholet; cf. '*their* sons.'

**20. Nethinim:** see on ii. 43-54.

**given:** the Hebrew word (*nathan*) is used with a reference o the current view of the etymology of Nethinim (persons *given* r *devoted* to God).

**service:** i. e. religious service. The same Hebrew word as this sense in Exod. xxx. 16 and xxxviii. 21. The Nethinim vere to help the Levites in the work of the sanctuary, see Ezek. lix. 9-14 and on ii. 40-55.

two hundred and twenty Nethinim: all of them wer
21 expressed by name. Then I proclaimed a fast there, a
the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves befor
our God, to seek of him a straight way, for us, and fc
22 our little ones, and for all our substance. For I wa
ashamed to ask of the king a band of soldiers and horse
men to help us against the enemy in the way: becaus
we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of ou

**expressed:** lit. 'perforated, punctured, marked with a point See Lev. xxiv. 11 (cf. Dillmann and Baentsch on); Num. i. 17 1 Chron. xii. 31, &c. The sense seems to be that in a complet register the names of these persons were ticked off to indica the presence of the persons.[1] Rabbinical writers say the ve came to mean simply 'to name,' and it is so rendered here b the Syr., Vulg., 'were called by their names.' See on x. 16.

21–30. *Preparations for the journey.* The incidents related in vers 15–30 must have taken place during the three days of encampme at the river Ahava (ver. 15), i. e. from 9th to 12th Nisan (ver. 31

21–23. *The fast.* Fasting is here a sign of humiliation befo God and an acknowledgement of dependence upon Him duri the journey about to be begun: see Dan. x. 12; Ps. xxxv. 1 Similarly, before going forth to war, it was the custom to off sacrifice to Yahweh (1 Sam. vii. 9; 1 Macc. iii. 47, &c.). The fasti and the sacrificing constituted a prayer for help.

**21. I proclaimed a fast:** see x. 6; Neh. viii. 1; 2 Chro xx. 3; Isa. i. 13; Joel i. 14, &c. The verb here (=to 'call out is particularly used of proclaiming feast and fast days. See i. for another verb which with a noun is translated 'made proclam tion' (see on i. 1).

**a straight way:** i. e. a prosperous journey; see Isa. xl. which is probably referred to, and where the same word occur

**little ones:** render, 'wives and little ones.' The Hebre word used has, according to Dillmann (see on Exod. xii. 3 the sense 'wives and children' in the Pentateuch source E, a it is perfectly right, with Bertholet, to give it that wider sen here. See Holzinger, *Hexateuch*, p. 287; see also Num. xxxii. 1 17, 24; Judges xviii. 21.

**substance:** see on i. 4, where the word is translated 'good

**22. a band,** &c.: Nehemiah did not scruple to accept su protection: Neh. ii. 9.

**enemy:** i. e. Bedouin and other robbers such as travelle encounter to-day. No special foe is thought of.

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[1] See Additional Notes, p. 363.

od is upon all them that seek him, for good ; but his
ower and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.
o we fasted and besought our God for this : and he was 23
ntreated of us. Then I separated twelve of the chiefs of 24
he [a] priests, [b]even Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their
rethren with them, and weighed unto them the silver, 25
nd the gold, and the vessels, even the offering for the
ouse of our God, which the king, and his counsellors,
nd his princes, and all Israel there present, had offered :
even weighed into their hand six hundred and fifty 26
alents of silver, and silver vessels an hundred talents ; of

[a] In Neh. xii. 24, *Levites.* [b] Or, *besides*

**The hand of our God:** see on vii. 6.

**seek:** the Hebrew word here denotes in general to seek for omething that has been lost, and not to seek to know about : see n iv. 2 and vii. 10.

24–30. *Guardians appointed for the gifts and offerings.*

**24.** Render, 'Then I set apart twelve of the chiefs of the riests, together with Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their rethren with them.' Ezra selected two groups of twelve, one eing priests, the other Levites, as is implied in ver. 30. On the umber 12 see p. 51.

**chiefs of the priests:** not high-priests, but leading members f the priestly class: lit. 'princes of the priests.'

**even:** for the prep. (*l*) in Hebrew, which introduces the ccusative see on ver. 16 ; but read here with 1 Esd. 'and' or 'in ddition to' (see R. Vm.).

**Sherebiah** and **Hashabiah** were Levites not priests.

**25.** See on vii. 15 f. and 19.

**weighed:** gold and silver coins are even now valued in anks, &c., by weight ; but in ancient times coins were not used, nd the precious metals were weighed. *Shekel* means literally vhat is weighed out.

**the offering:** lit. 'what is lifted up,' so 'a present,' word much used in the P code, but hardly if at all before D. t denotes in a general way a sacred gift, an offering to God, &c. See Deut xii. 6, 11 ; Ezek. xliv. 30, &c.

**there present:** Heb. 'that could be found,' i. e. that happened o be present ; see on Esther i. 5.

**26. six hundred and fifty talents of silver:** i. e. nearly quarter of a million pounds sterling (see on vii. 22). A silver alent had the value of about £360.

27 gold an hundred talents; and twenty bowls of gold, of a
thousand darics; and two vessels of fine bright brass,
28 precious as gold. And I said unto them, Ye are holy
unto the LORD, and the vessels are holy; and the silver
and the gold are a freewill offering unto the LORD, the
29 God of your fathers. Watch ye, and keep them, until ye
weigh them before the chiefs of the priests and the
Levites, and the princes of the fathers' *houses* of Israel
at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the LORD

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(and silver vessels) **an hundred talents:** the value of th silver would be approximately £360,000.

**of gold an hundred talents:** a gold talent had the value o something over £6,000. The sense intended here is, however probably the value of 100 talents of silver (see above) in nugget of gold: so Meyer (see *op. cit.*, p. 69). The values given seem t us very high, but they are not at all improbable, accordin to Meyer, who is not a theologian but perhaps the greatest livin historian of Persia: see on vii. 22.

**27. bowls of gold:** see on i. 10.

**darics:** see on ii. 69.

**28.** The bearers are holy, and what they bear with them i holy too.

**the God of your fathers:** see on vii. 28.

**29. chiefs of the priests and the Levites:** see on ver. 24.

**princes,** &c.: read with || 1 Esd., Guthe, Bertholet: 'th heads of the fathers' *houses*': see on i. 5 and cf. iii. 12; 1 Chron xxix. 6. The same Hebrew word is rendered in the R.V **chiefs** and **princes**. The priests and Levites in charge of th gifts on the journey (ver. 24) were, on reaching Jerusalem, to han them over to the representatives of the priests, Levites, and lait already in that city. We have perhaps to conceive of a college c governing body appointed by each of the classes mentioned.

**chambers:** it is better to keep this term for the Hebre word (*sela'*) which stands for the rooms built immediately in con tact with the Temple (see 1 Kings vi. 5; 1 Chron. xxxviii. 12), ar to employ the word 'cell' for the Hebrew word (*liskhah*) in th present verse (so *DB.* iv. 699$^{b}$, art. 'Temple'). There were thir of these 'cells' around the outer walls of the outer court of Ez kiel's temple: see Ezek. xl. 17-47, xlii. 1 ff.; and cf. Ezra x. Neh. x. 37, xiii. 4-7 and 1 Chron. ix. 26. They were used store-rooms for Temple vessels, provisions, &c., but priests reside in some of them: see x. 6; Ezek. xl. 46, &c.

So the priests and the Levites received the weight of the 30
silver and the gold, and the vessels, to bring them to
Jerusalem unto the house of our God.

Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the 31
twelfth *day* of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem : and
the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us
from the hand of the enemy and the lier in wait by the
way. And we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three 32
days. And on the fourth day was the silver and the 33
gold and the vessels weighed in the house of our God
[a] into the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest ;
and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas ; and with
them was Jozabad the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the
son of Binnui, the Levites ; the whole by number and 34
by weight : and all the weight was written at that time.

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[a] Or, *by*

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**30. priests . . . Levites:** see on ver. 24.

31-34. *The departure ; arrival at Jerusalem ; delivery of the gifts.*

**31. first month:** i. e. Nisan, about our April.

**hand,** &c. : see on vii. 6.

**enemy:** see on ver. 22, and cf. next clause.

**32. we came:** for the direction of the journey see on vii. 9.

**three days:** Nehemiah and his party also rested for three days after reaching Jerusalem: see Neh. ii. 11.

**33. the house,** &c. : i. e. into the cells or store-rooms : see on ver. 29.

**Meremoth:** see Neh. iii. 4, 21. There was some doubt as to the priestly origin of the family (*koz*) when Zerubbabel and his party reached Jerusalem : see Neh. vii. 63 ; but see 1 Chron. xxix. 20.

**Eleazar:** see on viii. 2.

**Jozabad:** mentioned in x. 23 and in Neh. vii. 7 (see on) as a Levite.

**Noadiah:** not mentioned elsewhere, but his father or ancestor **Binnui** is named in Neh. x. 10 and xii. 8 as a Levite.

It will be seen that, as the gifts and offerings were in charge of twelve priests and twelve Levites during the journey (see on ver. 24), so they are received at the Temple by two priests and two Levites.

**34. by number:** i. e. the vessels.

**by weight:** i. e. the gold and silver.

— **at that time:** to be joined with the next verse, as by

35 The children of the captivity, which were come out o
exile, offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel
twelve bullocks for all Israel, ninety and six rams
seventy and seven lambs, twelve he-goats for a sin offer
36 ing: all this was a burnt offering unto the LORD. An
they delivered the king's commissions unto the king'
satraps, and to the governors beyond the river: and the
furthered the people and the house of God.

the LXX (not *Luc.*, nor 1 Esd.). There were no punctuatio marks in Hebrew when Ezra-Nehemiah was written, though th recently discovered Aramaic Papyri show that words were usuall separated.

**35.** Sacrifice of thanksgiving.

**children of the captivity:** Ezra and his party just returne from exile: see on ii. 1 and iv. 1.

**offered,** &c.: see vi. 17, where we read of the very simila sacrifices offered by Zerubbabel and his party when the Temple wa dedicated.

**bullocks . . . rams . . . lambs:** see on vi. 17. The numbe of these offered was larger on the occasion implied in vi. 17.

**twelve he-goats:** see on vi. 17.

**sin offering:** see on vi. 17.

**all this was a burnt offering:** i. e. was wholly consumed.

**36. the king's commissions:** see especially vii. 21 f., 24.

**satraps:** the word in the M.T. (from which through th Greek our word is derived) is Persian, and occurs nowhere els in Ezra-Nehemiah, but it is found thrice in Esther and eight times i Daniel. There was but one satrap in Transpotamia (see on iv 10), but the heads of contiguous satrapies (Egypt, &c.) would nee to be informed of the king's instructions. Darius divided hi dominions into twenty provinces or satrapies: see on Esther i.

**governors:** sub-satraps, rulers of parts of the Transpotamia satrapy, Samaria, Judah, &c. But the same Heb. and Aram. wor (*pekhah*, cf. Persian *pasha*) has the meaning 'satrap' in v. 6, vi. Neh. iii. 7.

**satraps** and **governors** occur together, and therefore with different meaning, besides here in Dan. iii. 2; Esther iii. 12, viii. ix. 3. The word for 'governor' has its narrow sense in Hag. i. 10, ii. 1, 21 (Zerubbabel, the sub-satrap or governor of Judah).

Meyer[1] says that the Assyrian *pakhat*, Hebrew and Arama *pekhah*, was in the Persian period the usual term (so Gree ἔπαρχος) representing the Persian for 'satrap,' the latter occurrin only in O.T. writings of the Seleucid period (Daniel, Esther). But what of the present passage? He is hardly right in his statement that *pekhah* has this wider meaning (as satrap) throughout Ezra-Nehemiah, Haggai, and Mal. i. 8. As a matter of fact, it never has this sense in Haggai or Malachi, and but occasionally n Ezra-Nehemiah: see on Neh. ii. 9.

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[1] *Entstehung*, 31 f. (n.).

## IX f. (1 Esd. viii. 68–ix. 36).

## EZRA'S GRIEF AT HEARING OF THE MIXED MARRIAGES AND THE MEASURES HE TOOK TO PUT AN END TO THEM.

According to Torrey[1] and Kent[2] (who slavishly follows him at almost every point) Neh. vii. 70–$73^{a}$ joins immediately on to Ezra viii. It is, however, quite clear that these verses were copied in connexion with the preceding list from the document which has its primary place in ch. ii (see introductory remarks to that chapter): so Schrader, R. Smend, Ryssel, Kuenen, Stade, Cornill, Driver, König, Kosters, Ryle, Baudissin, Bertholet, Siegfried, &c.

Torrey and Kent make Neh. vii. $73^{b}$–x (with some excepted parts) follow Neh. vii. $73^{a}$. The sequence of events would in that case be as follows:—

1. The arrival at Jerusalem; Ezra and the incidents which immediately followed, Ezra vii. 32–36 + Neh. vii. 70–$73^{a}$.
2. The public reading of the law, Neh. vii. $73^{b}$–viii. 1–12.
3. Observance of the Feast of Tabernacles, Neh. viii. 13–18.
4. Ezra's crusade against mixed marriages, Ezra ix–x + 1 Esd. viii. 68–ix. 36.

1 Esd. and Josephus (who, however, generally follows the former) place No. 4 second in the above sequence of events, the order then being (using the above numbers) 1, 4, 2, 3.

Torrey says that on arriving at Jerusalem the first thing which Ezra was likely to do was to read the law. He was an expert in the law of Moses (Ezra vii. 6), and had brought it with him (ver. 14) that he might teach and apply it (verses 25 f.).

According to the M. T., 1 Esd. and Josephus, Ezra's first experience on reaching Jerusalem (after what is related in Ezra viii. 31–36) was to be informed of the mixed marriages, whereupon he deals with the same. Then, according to 1 Esd. and Josephus, the law was read. That is, 1 Esd. and Josephus place Neh. vii. $73^{a}$–x immediately after Ezra x, not as Torrey after Ezra vii. It is assumed here that Neh. vii. $73^{b}$–x is in its wrong place, for it is Ezra's history that it gives, and it belongs therefore to Ezra (see on Neh. vii. $73^{b}$, &c.).

What is most likely to have happened immediately after Ezra had fairly settled down in Jerusalem? Torrey says that Ezra would read and explain the law which he had brought with him.

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[1] *Composition*, &c., 29 ff.

[2] *Israel's Historical and Biographical Narratives*, 369 ff.

9 Now when these things were done, the princes drew

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It seems to the present writer much more probable that on discovering how his fellow countrymen had intermarried with the heathen, he would at once seek to remove this evil, for it ate at the very root of Judaism as then conceived. What is the use of a Jewish law unless you have a pure Jewish people? Ezra could not but have perceived the evil immediately after he had begun to look around, even if the princes (or nobles? see on Ezra ix. 1) had not informed him. It is hard to conceive of the events of Neh. vii. 73$^b$–viii. 18 happening without the most distant reference to what caused Ezra the greatest surprise and the profoundest grief.

On the contrary, having discovered the extent to which his people had departed from the faith and practice of their fathers, and having induced them to live a separate life and thus to constitute a Jewish community, a church nation, the next natural step would be to read to this regenerate society the laws which belonged to them, and which were intended for their guidance. He must have a Jewish people before he will teach the law which was held to belong pre-eminently to that people. In addition to any force that may lie in the above *a priori* reasoning as to what was likely to take place we have the testimony of 1 Esd. and Josephus as to what actually occurred. See further on Neh. vii. 73$^b$, &c.

1–5. *Ezra's astonishment and grief at hearing of the mixed marriages.*

**1. when these things were done:** lit. 'had been finished,' 'brought to an end.' The same phrase almost verbatim occurs in 1 Chron. xxxi. 1, and the verb in a similar form in 2 Chron. xx. 23, xxiv. 14, due to the fact that the Chronicler copied the older narrative in the present connexion.

By 'these things' we are to understand the events recorded in ch. viii. We have obviously to think of a period immediately following Ezra's arrival to account for his surprise on hearing of the mixed marriages. We have other indications of time in vii. 8, viii. 33, and x. 8 f. Inasmuch as Ezra arrived and the sacred gifts were handed over to the priests and Levites in the fifth month (vii. 8), and the general assembly to deal with the mixed marriages met in the ninth month (x. 8 f.), we have in the present verse to think of a time somewhere between the fifth and ninth month of the year 458 B. C.

**princes:** Hebrew *sarim*, the national leaders in civil and military matters, not necessarily members of the royal family; cf. the strict sense of the English word. In the post-exilic Jewish community the Hebrew word came probably to denote the heads of the Jerusalem clans, priestly, Levitical, and lay. See G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, i. 382 ff., where the now common view is defended that *sarim* = government officials.

near unto me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, *doing* according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken 2 of their daughters for themselves and for their sons; so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the

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**The people of Israel,** &c.: render, 'The people (including) Israel (=the common people), the priests and the Levites,' &c. The translation 'people of Israel' is allowed by the Hebrew according to a rather rare construction ('nom. apposition'), but in any case three classes are mentioned. See on x. 25.

**the peoples of the lands:** see on iii. 3. The races mentioned must not be literally understood. They are given merely as samples of what is meant. There could be no Hittites now in Palestine, and hardly Perizzites or Jebusites: on the last see p. 233.

Here it is implied that marriage with any non-Jewish people was forbidden. The older law prohibited marriage with Canaanites, Ammonites, and Moabites (see Exod. xxxiv. 16; Deut. vii. 3, xxiii. 3; cf. Neh. xiii. 1), but allowed marriage with Edomites and Egyptians (Deut. xxiii. 2). The law in Deut. xxi. 10 f. permitted marriage with non-Jews who were not Canaanites: see on vi. 21. Ezra must have felt that the continued existence of Judaism rendered it necessary to put an end to the intermarriage of Jews with others: cf. Ezek. xliv.

**doing . . . abominations:** render, 'as regards their abominations.' This last word denotes here not idolatrous practices as usually (Deut. xviii. 9; 1 Kings xiv. 24, &c.), but the mixed marriages.

**even of:** better, 'viz.' In Hebrew a preposition (*l*) is used which commonly introduces an enumeration of details.

**Canaanites:** dwellers in the lowlands west of the central mountain range of Palestine, though the word cannot be proved from either Heb. or Aram. etymology to mean 'lowlander.' In J and corresponding parts of the O. T., as in the Tel-el-Amarna tablets, Canaanites are the original inhabitants of West Palestine (see Amos ii. 9), a sense in which in E and D (Deut. i. 27, &c.), as generally in Babylonian, the word 'Amorites' is used.

**the Amorites:** read (with 1 Esd. viii. 66) 'the Edomites.'

**2. have taken:** as wives. So x. 44; 2 Chron. xi. 21, xiii. 21.

**holy seed:** i. e. the people (so often in Heb.) separated, in theory, to God: see Isa. vi. 13; and cf. Exod. xix. 5 f.; 1 Pet. ii. 5.

peoples of the lands: yea, the hand of the princes and
3 [a] rulers hath been [b] chief in this trespass. And when I
heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and
plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and
4 sat down astonied. Then were assembled unto me every
one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the trespass of them of the captivity; and I sa

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[a] Or, *deputies* [b] Or, *first*

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**mingled themselves:** by marriage. The same verb in the same sense occurs in Ps. cvi. 34 f.

**peoples of the lands:** see on iii. 8.

**princes:** see on ver. 1.

**rulers:** the Hebrew word here is probably a marginal gloss only one word occurs in the LXX, though in 1 Esd. viii. 70 ('ruler and great men') and in the Syr. ('elders and Levites') there are two, as in the M. T. The Hebrew word here is a transliterated form of the Assyrian *Shaknu* (a general, a governor of a province and is in Ezra-Nehemiah almost certainly a synonym for the word translated 'princes': so Meyer, *Entstehung*, 132 ff., Bertholet, Benzinger, *Bib. Arch.*$^{(2)}$, 263.

**3. I rent my** (inner) **garment and my** (outer) **mantle:** fo similar manifestations of grief and indignation see Gen. xxxvii. 29 34; Lev. x. 6; Joshua vii; Judges xi. 35; Job i. 20, &c.; and Esther iv. 1.

**and plucked off** (Heb. some of) **the hair of my head:** baldness is a sign of deep sorrow in Job i. 20; Ezek. vii. 18; Amo viii. 10, but in these cases the hair is apparently shaved off (se especially Job i. 20). See Homer's *Odyssey*, x end: 'They sa . . . lamented and plucked each his hair.' Plucking off the hair o another is a sign of indignation (Neh. xiii. 25) or of cruelty (Isa. l. 6).

**my beard:** plucking the beard as a sign of grief, nowhere else mentioned in the O.T.

**astonied:** Old English for 'astonished' in the sense of being 'bewildered,' 'dumbfounded,' which is a common meaning of the Hebrew word in either the transitive (Dan. xi. 31) or intransitive (Job xxi. 5; Ezek. iii. 15) sense.

**4. every one that trembled,** &c.: see x. 3; Isa. lxvi. 2.

**at the words,** &c.: i.e. at the consequences of infringing enactments on the Divine law forbidding the sin in question.

**because of the trespass of them of the captivity:** these words carry with them the implication that, contrary to Kosters view, there was a return before that of Ezra: see Introd. p. 23 ff and for **trespass** see on x. 2.

astonied until the evening oblation. And at the even- 5
ng oblation I arose up from my [a] humiliation, even with
my garment and my mantle rent; and I fell upon my
knees, and spread out my hands unto the LORD my God;

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[a] Or, *fasting*

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**astonied:** see on v. 3.

**until the evening oblation:** i.e. until the evening. Similarly in 1 Kings xviii. 29 and Judges ix. 1. See on iii. 5. In 2 Kings xvi. 15 we read of the morning burnt offering (flesh) and of the evening meal (vegetable) offering. The latter is the word employed here, and, denoting primarily a gift, is used for a sacrifice of any kind. It came to denote specially the meal or vegetable offerings which in post-exilic times (P) accompanied the burnt offering (see Exod. xxix. 42; Num. xxviii. 3-8).

In late pre-exilic times the *minkhah* or meal offering was presented in the evening (see 2 Kings xvi. 15; cf. 1 Kings xviii. 29, 36). This custom seems to be implied in Neh. x. 33 (34), see on. The exact time of this sacrifice was perhaps that called in later literature 'between the two evenings,' i.e. (probably) between the beginning of sunset and dark (see Exod. xii. 6 and Num. xxviii. 4). According to Ezekiel's programme (Ezek. xlvi. 13-15) the burnt and meal offerings were to be assigned to the morning alone. The later custom presented a burnt offering, as also a meal and a drink offering (as the accompaniment of the first), both morning and evening: see Exod. xxix. 38-42 and Num. xxviii. 3-8 (both late P).

5-15. *Ezra's confession* (‖1 Esd. viii. 70 (72)-87 (89)). Note the strong Deuteronomic and Jeremianic colouring of this prayer and of that in Neh. ix. 6-38, and observe how Ezra identifies himself with the nation in its guilt, according to the ancient principle of the oneness or solidarity of society (see Psalms, vol. ii, in this series, pp. 21, 195, and 218). The prayer in Dan. ix. 4-19 has this same feature.

**5. the evening oblation:** see on v. 4.

**humiliation:** so (rightly) the LXX (including *Luc.*). The Heb. noun occurs here only in the O. T., though the cognate verb (='to be humbled,' 'afflicted') is of frequent occurrence. In post-biblical Hebrew it denotes 'fasting,' and in ‖1 Esd. and R. V. it is (wrongly) so translated.

**with my garment . . . rent:** not a second time: see ver. 3.

**I fell upon my knees:** see 1 Kings viii. 54 and Dan. vi. 10. But prayer was offered standing also: see 1 Sam. i. 9; 1 Kings viii. 22; Matt. v. 5.

**spread out my hands unto the LORD my God:** see Exod.

6 and I said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift
up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased
over our head, and our guiltiness is grown up
7 unto the heavens. Since the days of our fathers we have
been [a] exceeding guilty unto this day; and for our iniquities
have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered
into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to
captivity, and to spoiling, and to confusion of face, as it
8 is this day. And now for a little moment grace hath

[a] Heb. *in great guiltiness.*

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ix. 27, xvii. 11; 1 Kings viii. 22; 2 Chron. vi. 12 f.; Isa. i. 15; 2 Macc. iii. 20. In early times the custom was in prayer to spread the hands towards the altar, the supposed abode of deity. See many representations of such on Egyptian monuments. In later times the face was turned during prayer towards Jerusalem (see 2 Chron. vi. 34; Dan. vi. 11), as among the Jews still, and as Moslems pray looking towards Mecca. Perhaps, however, the raising of the hands and eyes (Ps. cxxiii. 1, see on in *Century Bible*) in prayer is a survival of astral religion. Some anthropologists hold that when in prayer the hands were first raised it was in deprecation, the open parts of the hands being turned towards the deity.

**6.** See Jer. vi. 15, viii. 12.

**I am ashamed and blush:** the same two verbs in Jer. xxxi. 19 and viii. 12, and in another form (*Hiphil*) in Jer. vi. 15. The second verb, from a root = 'to strike,' has reference to the pain accompanying the feeling of shame, and might be rendered 'distressed.'

**for our iniquities are increased over our head,** so that they are like to overwhelm us. See Ps. xxxviii. 4.

**our guiltiness** (= liability to punishment) . . . **unto the heavens:** the same figure 2 Chron. xxviii. 9.

**7.** See Neh. ix. 32 and cf. Dan. ix. 7.

**kings of the lands:** i. e. of heathen lands, but the reference is in particular to the kings of Assyria and Babylon: see Neh. ix. 32.

**confusion:** lit. 'shame.'

**as it is this day:** it is for their iniquities that they are now subject to the king of Persia. Their sufferings are due to their sins.

**8. And now:** i. e. since Zerubbabel's return.

**for a little moment:** the space of eighty years since Cyrus issued his decree is small in comparison with the long periods of Israel's rebellion and punishment. For the expression see Isa. xxvi. 20.

**grace:** i.e. 'favour.' Except here and in Joshua xi. 20 the een shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a [a] nail in his holy place, hat our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. For we are bondmen; yet our 9

[a] See Is. xxii. 23.

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Hebrew word has the sense of supplication. The verbal root denotes, however, 'to show pity,' or 'favour.'

**to leave us a remnant to escape:** better, 'leaving us a remnant of escaped ones,' the last two words representing a Hebrew word ('that which has escaped') used in Exod. x. 5 and Joel ii. 3 of the land which escaped the ravages of the locusts. This Hebrew word is a great one in Isaiah for that part of Israel which survived the judgements of Yahweh: see Isa. iv. 2, x. 10, xxxvii. 31 f. Here it may have this general Isaianic sense, but it seems probable in the light of verses 13–15 and especially of Neh. i. 2. that the returned exiles are meant. In reckoning up the forces for righteousness, Ezra and Nehemiah take little account of the Jews who were not removed into exile.

**to give us a nail:** the language is based on Isaiah (xxii. 23), as is that of the preceding phrase, and must have here the same sense as in the original passage. A nail fastened into a wall to hold utensils is fixed and immovable. The 'remnant of escaped ones' is the nail now at length restored and established at Jerusalem (**his holy place**). The word translated **nail** means also tent-pin, and most expositors think the figure is that of a tent made and kept firm by the various pins driven into the ground (see Isa. liv. 2). But the reference is to Isa. xxii. 23, and we have 'nail' (or 'pin'), not 'nails' ('pins'). In ‖ 1 Esdras for 'nail' we find 'root and name.'

**may lighten our eyes:** i.e. may give us the joy which shows itself in bright shining eyes. The same figure in 1 Sam. xiv. 27, 29; Ps. xiii. 4; Prov. xxix. 13. The corresponding phrase in 1 Esdras is 'to discover our light' (or 'lightbearer') 'in the house of the Lord our God,' which Guthe reads here also.

**a little reviving** (‖ 1 Esdras, 'food': so the Heb. word in Judges vi. 4, xvii. 10). The writer seems to have in mind Ezek. xxxvii. 1–14, where the restoration of the nation to Jerusalem is graphically set forth under the figure of the reviving of dead bones. The realization of this prediction has in some measure (cf. **little**) taken place.

**in our bondage**: see ver. 9.

**9. bondmen:** being subject to the Persian government. The repeated expressions referring to the subjection in verses 8 f. show how the thought rankled in their bosoms.

God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the [a] ruins thereof, and to give us a [b] wall in Judah
10 and in Jerusalem. And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments,
11 which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land through the uncleanness of the peoples of

[a] Or, *waste places* [b] Or, *fence*

---

**hath extended mercy unto us:** render, 'has shown us favour.'

**the kings of Persia:** i. e. Cyrus, Darius I, and Artaxerxes I.

**to give . . . to set up . . . and to repair,** &c.: render 'giving . . . setting up . . . and repairing,' &c. We have here an enumeration of three ways in which God displayed His favour to the nation: (1) He restored them, or at least some of them: see on ver. 8 (**a little reviving**). (2) He enabled them to rebuild the Temple structure (see iii–vi), even to restore the parts which had been pulled down or injured. (3) He defended them from their enemies round about.

**a wall:** to be understood figuratively as in R.V. 'a fence,' 'giving us protection against our foes in the city and its outskirts,' setting as it were a hedge about them, such as surrounds a vineyard (see Isa. v. 5 and Ps. lxxx. 12, where the same word is used). The walls of Jerusalem cannot be meant, as they were not yet built (see Neh. ii. 11–17); and besides, such walls could not surround 'Jerusalem and Judah.' Kosters' argument from this verse that this chapter has its right place after Nehemiah falls thus to the ground. Oettli explains: 'Has made us a separate, independent community.'

**11. which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets:** no such words occur in the prophetical or any other parts of the O.T. Ezra seems to be giving the gist of what the law taught: see Lev. xviii. 24 f., 27. We should, however, have expected 'Moses' and not **the prophets** to have been mentioned, in harmony with the custom in Ezra and Nehemiah when the laws of the Pentateuch are referred to.

**unclean land:** the exact expression occurs nowhere else in the O.T. In Lev. xviii. 25 the Hebrew words so translated mean lit. 'a land made' (or 'that has become') 'unclean.' See 2 Chron. xxix. 5, and in contrast Isa. xxxvi. 17.

he lands, through their abominations, which have filled
t from one end to another with their filthiness. Now 12
herefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither
ake their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace
or their prosperity for ever: that ye may be strong, and
eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance
to your children for ever. And after all that is come 13
upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great guilt, seeing
that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniqui-

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**12. give not your daughters,** &c.: so substantially Deut. vii. 3.

**nor seek,** &c.: so Deut. xxiii. 6.

**peace:** the Hebrew word embraces in its meaning whatever is essential to perfect well-being: see on v. 7 and on Ps. cxix. 165 (*Century Bible*).

**that ye may be strong:** see Deut. xi. 8.

**and eat the good of the land:** see Isa. i. 19 and Gen. xlv. 18.

13–15. Is it possible that, notwithstanding the lesson of our punishment, our nation is, contrary to thy command, once more guilty of intermarrying with foreigners? Wilt thou not put an end to us? But thou art faithful to thy word, and dost preserve a remnant though we are guilty.

**13.** One restraining thought alone is mentioned: the suffering of the nation on account of its sin. The words **seeing that,** &c., to the end of the verse are intended to show that the guilt, the deserving, was beyond the actual punishment.

**God hast punished us less,** &c.: this is the correct sense of the original, which might be more literally rendered: 'Thou hast relented' (the same verb in Isa. xiv. 6) or, 'Thou hast restrained thy anger' (the word 'anger' is to be supplied with the verbs *shamar* and *naṭar* 'to keep') 'according to a scale of sins fewer than ours': i.e. 'Thou hast treated us better than our sins called for.'

Other renderings of the verse are: (1) 'Thou hast held back some of our sins,' i.e. prevented them from overwhelming us, a reference to ver. 6 ('our iniquities are increased over our heads'). So Siegfried, &c. (2) 'Thou hast judged us' (altering one Hebrew letter for another like it) 'more favourably than our sins deserved': so Syr., Bertholet, Buhl. (3) 'Thou hast lightened our sins,' i.e. lightened or lessened the punishment of them: so the LXX and 1 Esdras.

14 ties deserve, and hast given us such a remnant, shall we
again break thy commandments, and join in affinity
with the peoples that do these abominations? wouldest
not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so
15 that there should be no remnant, nor any to escape? O
Lord, the God of Israel, thou art righteous; for we are
left a remnant that is escaped, as it is this day: behold,
we are before thee in our guiltiness; for none can stand
before thee because of this.

10 [$C_E$] Now while Ezra prayed, and made confession, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God,

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**14. shall we again break,** &c.: better, 'do we again,' &c. They were actually guilty of this sin: see ver. 15. The form of the Hebrew verb (imperfect) can be translated by the present or by the future.

**again:** referring to the fact implied in Deut. vii. 1–7, that the Israelites had been guilty of intermarrying with the natives on reaching Canaan from Egypt.

**join in affinity:** lit. 'become sons in law.'

**the peoples that do** (lit. 'of') **these abominations:** LXX and 1 Esdras: 'the people of these lands' (or 'religions'), implying a rather similarly written Hebrew word which may be the original one: see on iii. 3.

**abominations:** see on ver. 1.

**remnant:** lit. 'what is left over' (after a sifting process by punishment).

**any to escape:** one word in Hebrew—that translated **remnant** in ver. 13.

**15. righteous:** i.e. 'faithful' according to the late meaning found in Isa. xl. ff. So 1 Esdras, 'thou art true' (ἀληθινός). It was God's faithfulness in keeping the word of His promise that secured the preservation of a remnant: see Isa. x. 20 ff., xi. 11 ff., &c., and Neh. ix. 33.

**guiltiness:** the Hebrew and English words denote 'liability to punishment.'

**for none,** &c.: render, 'for it is impossible on account of this thing to stand before thee.'

**stand:** see Ezek. xxii. 14; Ps. lxxvi. 7, lxxx. 3; Dan. x. 17.

(because of) **this:** Heb. neut. 'this thing': i.e. the sin in question.

## X (‖ 1 Esd. viii–ix. 36).

### REPENTANCE OF THE PEOPLE ON ACCOUNT OF THE MIXED MARRIAGES AND THE STEPS THEY TOOK TO PUT AN END TO THE EVIL.

In the preceding chapter Ezra is the speaker, and the first person (I, &c.) is accordingly used. In the present chapter, on he contrary, he is spoken of in the third person (he, &c.). The difference is generally accounted for by supposing that in chap. x Ezra's own words have been worked over and altered by an editor. See p. 16 ff.

1–8. The people take an oath to put away their non-Jewish wives (and the children they had borne them?).

To most readers it will appear cruelly immoral and irreligious to require the abandonment of wives that were not of Jewish descent and of the children begotten by them: see, however, on ver. 44, which favours the idea that in most cases the children were not put away. How different Paul's teaching respecting mixed marriages (1 Cor. vii. 10 ff.)! But one has to bear in mind the peculiar circumstances and the dominating ideas of the day. The ancients did not attach to marriage the sanctity and binding force with which Christian nations have invested it, so that the separation of married persons was much easier and more frequent (see Matt. v. 32, xix. 9).

Purity of racial blood was always, and especially at the time in question, a matter of supreme moment. The nation was believed, as such, to have been selected to be the world's teacher. For this it was to keep itself apart from other nations. The idea of national and ceremonial purity was now particularly deep in the national consciousness, owing in large part to the teaching of the Deuteronomist and Ezekiel. To the priests of these times there was no middle way between purity and impurity: compromise was impossible. It must, however, be remembered that there was an anti-puritan as well as a puritan party, and of this the Book of Ruth is one exponent. See Bertholet, *Die Stellung*, &c.

1–5. *The people confess their guilt, and undertake to put away the strange wives.*

**1. made confession:** the Hebrew verb so translated means to give thanks, praise, and (as here and in Neh. i. 6 and ix. 2 f.) to make acknowledgement of sin. Ezra made confession on behalf of the people's sin, because, being one of them, he shared their guilt according to the old idea of national solidarity: see p. 137, and on Ps. cvi. 6 (*Century Bible*).

**casting himself down,** &c.: stretching hands towards the Temple, the supposed abode of Deity: see 1 Kings viii. 29 f., 35 and Dan. vi. 10 and on Ps. cxxi. 1 (*Century Bible*). This would be in the priests' court, on the eastern side of the house, perhaps in

there was gathered together unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children: for
2 the people wept very sore. And Shecaniah, the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have married strange women of the peoples of the land: yet
3 now there is hope for Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put

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front of the altar of burnt offerings. The people assembled in the great court could see and hear him.

**Israel:** the whole community, not as in ix. 1 (see on), and often in Ezra-Nehemiah the lay portion.

**congregation:** see on ii. 64. The Hebrew denotes in particular a gathering for worship.

**men, women, and children:** see Deut. xxix. 11, xxxi. 12; 2 Chron. xx. 13; Neh. viii. 3, x. 28.

**women:** i. e. the Jewish wives whose sympathies would be sure to side with Ezra's crusade.

**children:** not the word used for infants (*taph*, see Esther iii. 13 and viii. 11). The noun used in 1 Esdras (*neanias*) is applied to Saul in Acts vii. 58. Josephus uses it of Agrippa I at the age of forty.

**2. Shecaniah:** see viii. 3 and cf. ver. 26. Did he take action against his own father?

**sons of Elam:** see ii. 7, viii. 7.

**trespassed:** the Hebrew verb (*ma'al*) is used of violating an express command: see verses 6, 10; Neh. i. 8, xiii. 27. The cognate noun occurs in ix. 2, 4, which see for what is here meant: see on ver. 13 (**transgressed**).

**married:** lit. 'to give a home to,' an idiom = 'to marry,' found only in Ezra-Nehemiah, perhaps with the implication that the union in question was not true marriage: see the next note.

**strange** (women): this adjective is used in Proverbs (ii. 16, vii. 5, &c.) to describe a harlot; the women whom they had living with them were harlots, not wives: see last note (peoples of the) **land:** see on iii. 3.

**3. covenant:** the only occurrence of the word in Ezra. Here it denotes a vow or solemn undertaking made to God, as in 2 Chron. xxix. 6.

Usually God is said to make a covenant with men, as in Ezek. xxiv. 35.

**put away:** lit. 'to put out,' as in ver. 19, i. e. to remove from the houses the 'strange women' whom they had introduced: see on ver. 2 (**marry**). The ordinary word for putting away a wife

away all the wives, and such as are born of them, accord-
ng to the counsel of [a] my lord, and of those that tremble
at the commandment of our God; and let it be done ac-
cording to the law. Arise; for the matter belongeth 4
unto thee, and we are with thee: be of good courage,
and do it. Then arose Ezra, and made the chiefs of the 5
priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they
would do according to this word. So they sware. Then 6

[a] Or, *the Lord*

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occurs in Deut. xxii. 19, &c.; cf. Gen. xxi. 10 for another such verb. The union, not being a true marriage, could be brought to an end by merely turning the woman out: no divorce proceedings were necessary.

**all the wives:** read (with *Luc.* and virtually 1 Esdras) 'all our foreign wives.'

**according to the counsel of my lord** (= Ezra): Ezra seems to have been entrusted by the Persian king with supreme authority in Jewish matters. See vii. 5.

**those that tremble,** &c.: see on ix. 4. In 1 Esdras 'Those who obey the law of the Lord,' which Guthe thinks represents the original Hebrew text.

**let it be done,** &c.: render according to the M. T. (so *Luc.*), 'it shall (or will) be done,' a mere statement of fact.

**4. Arise:** the Heb. verb denotes here, as very often, 'rouse yourself,' 'be energetic.' Before another verb it denotes to set about, begin the action of the verb. See Joshua i. 2; Judges iv. 14; 1 Chron. xxii. 6.

1 Esdras has 'Arise and put into execution,' which may well be a mere interpretation, or perhaps a second verb has fallen out from the Hebrew.

**belongeth,** &c.: Heb. 'rests upon thee as an obligation.'

**be of good courage,** &c.: lit. 'be strong,' &c. So 1 Chron. xxii. 16; cf. Joshua 1. 6.

**5. arose:** see on ver. 4 (**arise**).

**chiefs:** the word belongs to each of the three classes enumerated (priests, Levites, and the laity): see on ix. 1.

**the priests, the Levites:** the regular Deuteronomic phrase (all Levites were priests, see Deut. xvii. 9-18, xviii. 1, xxi. 5, &c.), indicating, if genuine, early authorship. But we should probably read with *Luc.*, LXX, and 1 Esdras 'the priests and the Levites,' the later (P) phraseology.

**Israel:** here the laity: see on ver. 1 and ix. 1.

**6.** *Ezra's grief.*

Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib : [a] and *when* he came thither, he did eat no bread, nor drink water : for he mourned because of the trespass of them
7 of the captivity. And they made proclamation through-

[a] According to some ancient versions, *and he lodged there.*

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**Then Ezra rose,** &c. : render, 'And when Ezra had risen from before the house of God he went into the chamber of Jehohanan, the son of Eliashib, and passed the night there, eating no bread and drinking no water,' &c.

**chamber** (Heb. *lishkah*) : better 'cell,' see on viii. 29.

**Jehohanan the son of Eliashib :** since Eliashib was high-priest during the whole or greater part of the activity of Nehemiah (see Neh. iii. 1, 20, xiii. 4, 28) this Jehohanan cannot be identical with Johanan, the father and predecessor of Jaddua (see Neh. xii. 22, cf. ver. 11), the high-priest who, according to Josephus [1], went to meet Alexander the Great as the latter was advancing towards Jerusalem. Assuming that Jaddua was high-priest in 333 B. C. his father could not have held the office at the time with which we are dealing (*circa* 440 B. C.). Now in the Sachau Aramaic Papyri, No. 1, line 18, mention is made of a Jehohanan, high-priest at Jerusalem at the time this letter was sent to Bagoas, governor of Judah, viz. 407 B. C. Eliashib must have had a son with this name, and as he was himself high-priest about 440 B. C. this son might well have been high-priest in 407 B. C. In favour of this is the identity of the names—Jehohanan in both cases, while in Neh. xii. 22 it is Johanan. Both are Hebrew forms of our 'John.'

It is quite evident, as Nöldeke and others have pointed out, that the list of high-priests in Neh. xii is defective, see notes on the chapter. There is no need therefore to interpret the words 'the chamber of Jehohanan, son of Eliashib,' proleptically as meaning 'the chamber subsequently known as that of Jehohanan,' &c

**and when he came thither** (Heb. 'there') : read (with 1 Esdras), 'and passed the night there,' changing one Hebrew consonant (*k*) to one much like it (*n*). In the M. T. two identica verbal forms occur in the same verse, which is suspicious.

**he did eat no bread, nor drink water :** for fasting as a expression of mourning see on viii. 21.

**trespass :** see on ver. 2, and for the whole clause on ix. 4.

7 f. *An assembly summoned.*

**7. made proclamation :** see on i. 1, and cf. Neh. viii. 15. See also on viii. 21, where a different verb is employed.

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[1] *Antiq.* x. 8, 5.

but Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the
captivity, that they should gather themselves together
unto Jerusalem; and that whosoever came not within 8
three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the
elders, all his substance should be [a] forfeited, and himself
separated from the congregation of the captivity. Then 9
all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves
together unto Jerusalem within the three days; it was the

[a] Heb. *devoted.*

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**Judah and Jerusalem:** see on ii. 1.

**8. within three days:** since in so short a time the proclamation could be made and responded to, the area within which the community resided must have been very restricted. See plan opposite p. 159.

**princes:** see on ix. 1.

**elders:** in Ezra an Aramaic (v. 5, &c.) and (as here) a Heb. word are so rendered. Every city (but see below) had its elders (see ver. 14), who were heads of houses, and controlled local affairs as British town or city councillors. Princes were the heads of the three classes of Jewish society, see on ix. 1. It is strange, but significant, that we do not read of elders at Jerusalem: probably the princes, residing for the most part at Jerusalem, acted as the local as well as the general authority. We do not meet with the words prince or elder in Nehemiah, though corresponding words are made use of. See on Neh. ii. 16, and cf. G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, ii. 377.

**all his substance:** in earlier times idolatrous cities were to be devoted (Heb. *kherem*, Gk. *anathema*, see Gal. i. 8 f.), i. e. offered up, to God as a burnt offering: see Joshua vi. 17 f., vii. 1, 11, 15, &c. (JE). In the later laws individual Israelites took the place of Canaanite, &c., cities, and were put to death for idolatry (Deut. vii. 26; Lev. xxvii 29 (P)), or excluded from the community (John ix. 22, xii. 44, xiv. 2; cf. Luke vi. 22), their property being seized (made *kherem*, a devoted thing) and added to the wealth of the Temple (see Lev. xxvii, 28 f.). The fact that Ezra had the power to make and enforce such laws shows he had been entrusted by the Persians with supreme authority in Jewish matters (see vii. 25 f.). Among the Israelites property once possessed would not be permanently alienated except in very extreme cases like the above.

9–17. *Meeting of the assembly; decision to appoint a commission of investigation.*

**9. Judah and Benjamin:** see on i. 5.

**ninth month:** i. e. Kislew (see Zech. vii. 1 and on Neh. i. 1),

ninth month, on the twentieth *day* of the month: and all the people sat in the broad place before the house of God, trembling because of this matter, and for [a] the great
10 rain. And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have trespassed, and have married strange
11 women, to increase the guilt of Israel. Now therefore [b] make confession unto the LORD, the God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves

[a] Heb. *the rains.* [b] Or, *give thanks*

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corresponding roughly to portions of Nov.-Dec., the time of the early rain. The 20th Kislew would be nearly five months after Ezra's first arrival (see vii. 9). Perhaps this time was required to make arrangements for the meeting of the commission: not at all unlikely there was opposition, internal (see ver. 15) or external. The time of the year was unfavourable for such gatherings, but Ezra's zeal could brook no delay.

**the broad place:** see on Neh. iii. 26 (**water gate**). The Hebrew word has a sense similar to our 'square' or 'place,' and stands commonly for the open space outside the gates of Eastern cities, used as a market-place (see Deut. xiii. 16; 2 Sam. xxi. 12, and Esther iv. 6). This open space was situate on the inside of the Water Gate in the north-east of the temple area.

**great rain:** a correct rendering of the Heb. 'rains' ('plural of intensity'). The reference is to the early and heavy rains. During my visit to Palestine in 1888 they began on Nov. 4, the second day after my arrival at Jerusalem. In the course of the following two months there were often for days together heavier rains than I have seen elsewhere.

**10.** (Ezra) **the priest:** see on vii. 11.

**stood up:** see on ver. 4 (**arise**).

**trespassed, married, strange women:** see on ver. 2.

**to increase:** better 'increasing' (gerund). The Hebrew permits either rendering.

**guilt:** liability to punishment: see on ix. 4.

**11. make confession:** or 'give thanks,' 'render praise': see pp. 137, 143.

(do his) **pleasure:** objectively understood 'what He desires, is pleased with': see Ps. cxlv. 19 and cf. Neh. ix. 24 (end of verse), Dan. xi. 3, 16, 36.

**separate yourselves:** see on vi. 21. They were to isolate themselves from their heathen neighbours by avoiding unnecessary intercourse, observing the laws anent foods and drinks, &c.; and they were also to put away their heathen wives.

rom the peoples of the land, and from the strange
vomen. Then all the congregation answered and said 12
vith a loud voice, [a] As thou hast said concerning us, so
nust we do. But the people are many, and it is a time of 13
nuch rain, and we are not able to stand without, neither
s this a work of one day or two: for we have greatly
ransgressed in this matter. Let now our princes [b] be ap- 14
pointed for all the congregation, and let all them that are
n our cities which have married strange women come at

[a] Or, *As thou hast said, so it behoveth us to do* [b] Heb. *stand.*

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**peoples of the land:** see on iii. 3.

**12. congregation:** see on ii. 64. Here the word includes the eturned exiles only (see ver. 16).

**As thou hast said,** &c.: render as in the R.Vm., 'As thou iast said, so it behoveth us to do.' The E.VV. translate the same Iebrew word ('concerning *us*, so must *we* do') twice over. The nisplacing of the Hebrew accent has led to this confusion.

**13.** Three hindrances to the expeditious settlement of the natter are urged.

1. The magnitude of the assembly: how could so many find odgings and entertainment.

2. The weather was unpropitious. In December, 1888, I saw s much snow in and about Jerusalem, and found it as keenly old, as during the severest winter in Great Britain. The early ains are generally accompanied by a sudden depression in he temperature.

3. The large number of mixed marriages to be dealt with.

**transgressed:** the root idea of the Hebrew verb (*pasha'*) is to rebel'; in late Hebrew, as here, it is specially used of violating specific law: see Deut. viii. 23. See on ver. 2 (**trespassed**).

**14. princes:** see on ix. 1. They are here to act with the **lders** and **judges.**

**for** (all the congregation): 'on behalf of,' not 'instead of.'

**cities:** i. e. other than Jerusalem. Cases would be tried vhere the suspected parties resided (cf. our system of legal procedure and travelling judges). The princes resided at Jerusalem nd would act in that city: see on ver. 8. The Hebrew word for **cities** (*'arim*) is used for villages, towns, and what we call cities see the concordances), though in some passages it denotes the dea of a fortified place (2 Kings xvii. 9, xviii. 8, &c.), and even a fortress (see 2 Sam. v. 7, 9, vi. 10, &c.).

**strange women:** see on ver. 2.

appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God
15 be turned from us, [a] until this matter be despatched. Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahzeiah the son of Tikvah [b] stood up against this *matter*: and Meshullam and

[a] Or, *as touching this matter* [b] Or, *were appointed over this*

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**at appointed times:** so Neh. x. 34, xiii. 31.

**judges:** in earlier parts of the O. T. the king is called by the Hebrew word Englished 'judge': see Deut. xvii. 9, 12; 2 Kings xvi. 5; Isa. xvi. 5. The *shophets* (E.VV. 'judges') of Israel prior to the establishment of the monarchy were deliverers, and in their several districts administrators, as, e. g. Gideon (Judges vi. 11 ff.), Jephthah (Judges x. 6 ff.), and Samson (Judges xiii. 1 ff.), though the last named belongs to a different category.

It is difficult to differentiate 'elders' and 'judges' in post-exilic biblical literature. It seems highly probable that the presiding elder in each city (see on **cities**) was recognized as *shophet* or judge. We find even the priests arrogating to themselves the functions and prerogatives of the judge (see Deut. xvii. 9, xix. 17, xxi. 5), just as in later times the high-priest became king (see vii. 5).

The leading officials in Tyre and Carthage were called *shophetim* ('judges' is a very misleading rendering). The two *sufetes* (= *shophetim*) in Carthage corresponded to the two consuls in Republican Rome.

**until the fierce,** &c.: render, 'so that the fierce wrath of ou God may be turned,' &c. The Hebrew conjunction rendered **until** has this (*telic*) meaning also in Gen. xxvii. 44 and Mic. vii. 9.

**until this matter,** &c.: read (with 2 Heb. MSS., the Versions and 1 Esdras) as in R. Vm., 'as touching this matter.'

**15.** The only prominent men to oppose the policy outlined i ver. 14 were Jonathan and Jahzeiah, aided by Meshullam an a Levite called Shabbethai. This is implied in the rendering o the R. V., which is the only possible one; but it has difficulties and many scholars prefer, on account of them, to follow the A. V and the R. Vm., which regard the four men named as helpers, no hinderers, of the proposal described in the foregoing verse. Her are some of the grounds for the latter view:—

1. The verb here rendered in the R. V., **stood up against**, i identical with that rendered in ver. 14, 'be appointed for.' I reply, let it be noted that the preposition following the verb i different in each case, and that there are many examples in Hebre in which a verb has opposite meanings with different prepositions Cf. the Hebrew verbs 'to be sorry,' &c., and 'to fight.'

As a matter of fact this verb (lit. 'to stand') means 'to stan

Shabbethai the Levite helped them. And the children 16
of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, *with* cer-
tain heads of fathers' *houses*, after their fathers' houses, and
all of them by their names, were separated ; and they sat

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against' in Lev. xix. 16 ; 1 Chron. xxi. 1 ; 2 Chron. xxii. 23 ; Dan. viii. 25, xi. 15. Perhaps the writer intends a word-play in verses 14 f. ('stand for,' 'stand against').

2. The beginning of ver. 16 is said to imply that the returned exiles supported the suggestion of ver. 14. But if the text is not at fault (which is doubtful) we may understand the word 'so' in ver. 16 to refer to what is said in ver. 14, ver. 15 being treated as a parenthesis. We may then thus paraphrase ver. 16: 'But the returned exiles acted thus (see ver. 14) (though Jonathan, &c., stood up against it).'

3. We do not read elsewhere of any opposition. It should, however, be remembered that our narrative is but a brief and imperfect record of what took place, and, to say the least, opposition of the kind here advocated is exactly what one would have expected.

It may be added :—

1. The word rendered **only** has often the meaning of 'but,' 'however,' introducing an adversative sentence : see Gen. ix. 4, xx. 12, xxi. 21 ; Lev. xxi. 23, xxvii. 28 ; Num. xviii. 15, 17 ; 2 Sam. iii. 13 ; Jer. x. 24.

2. We know that it was Ezra who superintended the execution of the proposal of ver. 14, and not Jonathan, &c. It must, however, be allowed that the Versions, including 1 Esdras, favour the A. V. and R. Vm.

3. Van Hoonacker[1] thinks Jonathan (see viii. 6) and Jahzeiah (nowhere else mentioned) were priests and their two helpers Levites. This is, however, a case of being wise above what is written.

**16.** See on preceding verse.

**children of the captivity :** see on iv. 1 and also on ii. 1.

**And Ezra,** &c. : render, 'And Ezra chose (lit. 'separated') for himself a number (lit. 'men') of heads of fathers' houses according to their fathers' houses, all of them marked (ticked) off by name.'

**heads of fathers' *houses* :** see on ii. 59.

**by their names :** probably the phrase at the end of viii. 20 (see on) stood originally here as there, the participle 'marked' (R. V. 'expressed') having been overlooked by an early copyist.

**were separated :** read with 1 Esdras and some MSS. of the LXX, '(And Ezra) chose (lit. 'separated') for himself' : see above.

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[1] *Néhémie et Esdras,* p. 38 (n.).

down in the first day of the tenth month to examine the
17 matter. And they made an end with all the men that had
married strange women by the first day of the first month.
18 And among the sons of the priests there were found that

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**tenth month:** i. e. Tebet (Dec.-Jan.): see on ver. 9.

**to examine,** &c.: another instance of the tacit use by the English translators (E.VV.) of an amended text. The M.T. has (apparently) 'for Darius,' the consonants of which are almost exactly the same as 'to examine.'

**17.** The M. T. is incapable of yielding any passable sense. Bertheau and succeeding commentators are almost certainly right in regarding the words **the men that had married strange wives** as the heading which originally preceded the lists in verses 18-44. Ver. 17 will then contain excellent Hebrew, the translation of which is: 'And (the inquiry) was brought to an end in every place by the first day,' &c. If the M. T. is retained we must render: 'And (the inquiry) was brought to an end as regards all the men who had married strange women by the first day,' &c.

**And they made an end:** the construction is that of the indefinite subject and is better translated by the passive. It is the thing done that is emphasized, not the agent or agents.

**married strange women:** see on ver. 2.

**first month:** i. e. Nisan (March-April): the Jewish year began with Nisan after the exile down to the time of Alexander the Great. Originally, however, Tishri (Sept.-Oct.) was the first month (see Exod. xxiii, JE; xxxiv, J). Josephus and the Mishnah make a distinction between a sacred and a secular year, beginning respectively with Nisan and Tishri. This is, however, a distinction about which the scriptures know nothing, though in the P laws as to feasts, &c., Nisan opens the year: see Josephus, *Antiq.* i. 3, 3, and Schürer, *Geschichte*$^{(4)}$, &c., i. 32 ff. (E.V. i. 1 38 ff.).

The commissioners had spent three months (cf. verses 16 f.) in the work of trying the cases. That the evil was not entirely removed is proved by Neh. xiii. 23, 26-28; cf. Neh. ix. 2.

18-44. *Lists of 'the men who had married strange women'*: see on ver. 17. This list must have been carefully preserved in the city or temple archives. Even the fertile brain of the Chronicle could hardly have invented these names and what is said in connexion with them.

The grouping of the persons involved follows closely that o the lists in ch. ii (see introductory remarks to) and in Neh. vii.

I. Temple officers:

1. Priests, seventeen in number: 18-22.

had married strange women: *namely*, of the sons of
Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and his brethren, Maaseiah,
and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah. And they gave 19
their hand that they would put away their wives; and
being guilty, *they offered* a ram of the flock for their
guilt. And of the sons of Immer; Hanani and 20
Zebadiah. And of the sons of Harim; Maaseiah, and 21
Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uzziah. And of 22
the sons of Pashhur; Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael,
Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah. And of the Levites; 23
Jozabad, and Shimei, and Kelaiah (the same is Kelita),
Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer. And of the singers; 24
Eliashib: and of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and

---

2. Levites, six in number: 23.

3. Singers (2, see on ver. 24) and porters (3), five in number: 24.

II. The laity (Israel), eighty-six in number: 25-43. We do not read here of Nethinim (see p. 63 f.) or of Solomon's servants (see p. 64).

18-22. Priests.

**18. sons of the priests**: render 'priests' and see on ii. 41 and iv. 1.

**married strange women**: see on ver. 2.

**Jeshua**: see on ii. 2.

**19. they gave their hand**: i. e. they entered into a compact: see 2 Kings x. 15; 2 Chron. xxx. 8; Lam. v. 6; Ezek. xvii. 17.

**put away**: see on ver. 3.

**and being guilty . . . a ram**: read (with Kuenen and most later scholars), 'and their guilt offering was a ram.' No change in the consonantal, the only original part of the text, is required. The M. T. makes poor Hebrew and (omitting the italicized words inserted by the translators) poorer English.

For guilt offering see Lev. v. 14 ff.

**ram of the flock**: in Lev. v. 18 'ram.'

(for their) **guilt**: see on ix. 6.

**20-22.** *Priests*: see on ii. 36-39.

**23.** *Levites.*

**Kelaiah** (**Kelita**): see Neh. viii. 7, x. 10.

**24.** *Singers and porters.* Note that these two classes are mentioned as distinct from the Levites. See p. 61 f.

**Eliashib**: add (with *Luc.* and 1 Esdras) 'and Zaccur.'

25 Uri. And of Israel: of the sons of Parosh; Ramiah,
and Izziah, and Malchijah, and Mijamin, and Eleazar,
26 and Malchijah, and Benaiah. And of the sons of Elam;
Mattaniah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jere-
27 moth, and Elijah. And of the sons of Zattu; Elioenai,
Eliashib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and
28 Aziza. And of the sons of Bebai; Jehohanan, Hana-
29 niah, Zabbai, Athlai. And of the sons of Bani; Mesh-
ullam, Malluch, and Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal, [a]Jeremoth.
30 And of the sons of Pahath-moab; Adna, and Chelal,
Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, and Binnui, and
31 Manasseh. And *of* the sons of Harim; Eliezer, Isshijah,
32 Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon; Benjamin, Malluch,

[a] Another reading is, *and Ramoth.*

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25–43. *Laymen.* The houses mentioned here occur also in ch. ii. 3 ff. (see on), though in a different order.

**25. Israel:** i. e. the lay portion of the nation, as in ix. 1 and Neh. xi. 3; see (for the wider sense) x. 1. The name stood for the Northern Kingdom until that kingdom came to a close (1 Kings xxiv. 7, 10), after which it was used for the Southern Kingdom (ii. 50; Jer. ii. 12, 31, &c.), and even for the new Jewish community made up almost entirely of returned exiles (x. i).

**Malchijah:** read (with *Luc.*) 'Michaiah.'

**26. Jehiel:** see on ver. 2.

**28. Zabbai:** in ii. 9 'Zaccai.' In Hebrew the letters *b* and *c* (*k*) are almost identical, and are therefore constantly confounded by the ancient translators.

**29. Bani:** a house or clan of the same name is mentioned in ver. 34, copyist's mistake. Perhaps (as Keil, &c., suggest) we should in one of these places read Bigwai (**Bigvai**) (ii. 14). Moreover, whereas the number of offenders belonging to the other houses vary from four to eight, of the house of the second Bani (ver. 34) twenty-seven are mentioned. Probably the text has suffered corruption, several heads of houses having stood originally in the section beginning with ver. 24. Schultz holds that the twenty-seven men of verses 34–41 belonged to different country districts of Judah.

**Jeremoth:** to be preferred to *qr.* and R.Vm. 'and Ramoth.'

**31. (And)** ***of*****:** remove the italics and (with LXX, 1 Esdras, many Hebrew MSS.) restore the corresponding Hebrew word (*min*).

Shemariah. Of the sons of Hashum; Mattenai, Mattat- 33
ah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, Shimei. Of 34
he sons of Bani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel; Benaiah, 35
Bedeiah, [a]Cheluhi; Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib; Matta- 36, 3
niah, Mattenai, and [b]Jaasu; and Bani, and Binnui, Shimei; 38
and Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah; Machnadebai, 39, 4
Shashai, Sharai; Azarel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah; 41
Shallum, Amariah, Joseph. Of the sons of Nebo; Jeiel, 42, 4
Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, [c]Iddo, and Joel, Benaiah.
All these had taken strange wives: and [d]some of them 44
had wives by whom they had children.

[a] Another reading is, *Cheluhu.*
[b] Another reading is, *Jaasai.* [c] Another reading is, *Jaddai.*
[d] Or, *some of the wives had borne children*

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**34. Uel:** read (with *Luc.* and 1 Esdras) 'Joel.'

**38. and Bani, and Binnui:** read (with LXX, 1 Esdras), 'and of the sons of Binnui.' The difference in the Hebrew is slight.

**44. had taken:** cf. the Heb. verb rendered 'married' in ver. 2 (see on).

**strange wives:** Hebrew, as in ver. 2 (see on), 'strange women.'

**and some of them,** &c.: the M.T. is hopelessly corrupt, and as it stands, means nothing. There is, in the Commentary of Bertheau-Ryssel a statement of many attempts at restoration, not one of them being plausible. It is better to follow the text implied in 1 Esd. ix. 36, reading 'and they put them away with their children.'

### EZRA'S SUBSEQUENT HISTORY.

In Neh. i. 1 we pass on at once to the history of Nehemiah, the account of Ezra's activity suddenly coming to an end. Then the thread of Ezra's narrative is resumed in a quite unexpected way at Neh. vii. $73^b$, in a context which tells of Nehemiah's life and work, Ezra's name not occurring once. This isolated section (Neh. vii. $73^b$–x) relates to Ezra and his doings, Nehemiah's name coming quite casually in at two places (Neh. viii. 9 and x. 22, see on), and then almost certainly through a copyist's mistake or as an editor's gloss. The contents of this Ezra section in a Nehemiah context may be thus laid out :—

1. The public reading of the law (vii. $73^b$–viii. 12). After the

events recorded in Ezra ix f. it was quite natural to proclaim publicly the law by which the people's lives were to be regulated.

2. Observance of the Feast of Tabernacles (viii. 13-18).

3. Repentance and prayer of the people on finding that their conduct came so far short of the law now read (ix).

4. The people make a covenant to observe the law (x).

That the section thus analysed originally followed Ezra x, and belongs strictly to Ezra's biography, not Nehemiah's, appears on several considerations.

1. This agrees with the order of events in 1 Esdras, where the reading of the law (1 Esd. ix. 37-55, cf. Neh. vii. $73^b$-viii. 12) follows the expulsion of the strange women (1 Esd. viii. 68-ix. 36, cf. Ezra ix f.).

2. The sequence of events in Josephus (*Antiq.* xi. 5) is identical with that of 1 Esdras, though too much weight should not be put on this, as throughout Josephus follows the apochryphal 1 Esdras rather than the canonical Ezra.

3. In the section under consideration (Neh. vii. $73^b$ ff.) Ezra suddenly steps forward, becoming the chief agent, and as suddenly disappears. Omitting this part of Nehemiah the rest of the book is continuous and homogeneous.

4. In the corresponding portion of 1 Esdras and Josephus no mention is made of Nehemiah, which is in favour of omitting his name from Neh. viii. 9 and x. 22.

5. In this section Nehemiah comes before us as 'the Tirshatha' (viii. 9, x. 1), an epithet used besides only of Sheshbazzar (vii. 65, 73; Ezra ii. 63), whereas in the undisputed Nehemiah memoirs he is called *pekhah* or governor (Neh. v. 14 f., 18).

6. We read in viii. 13 of 'heads of fathers' *houses*' as often in Ezra (see p. 52 f.). In Nehemiah the technical terms are quite different (see ii. 16, iv. 8, 13, v. 7, 17, vii. 7, xii. 40, xiii. 11).

7. Many turns of expressions frequent in Nehemiah are absent from these chapters, e. g. 'According to the good hand of my God upon me' (ii. 8, 18), 'God put into my heart' (ii. 12 and vii. 5). Moreover Nehemiah speaks of himself in the first person. In Neh. viii. 9, x. i he is spoken of in the third person—though the name has to be rejected in both cases. See on the verses.

8. Removing the section in question, Neh. vii. $73^a$ and xi. 1 (see on the latter) join well together, whereas there does not seem to be any connexion between Neh. x and xi. Most of the above points were noticed and the same conclusions drawn by J. D. Michaelis in his annotated translation into German of the Hebrew Bible (1769-83, 13 vols.).

Such is the view accepted by virtually all modern scholars, though Keil vigorously defends the historical continuity of these chapters (see Com., Introd.), holding with Bertheau (not his editor Ryssel), Schultz, &c., that during the events here related Nehemiah was present at Jerusalem, though Ezra occupied now the chief place, as the work (reading the law, &c.) was much more on the lines of his activity.

From the fact that Nehemiah's name occurs twice it has been commonly inferred that the final editor of Ezra-Nehemiah took this section to belong to Nehemiah's own history, but this is more than doubtful (see on Neh. viii. 9 and x. 1). It is more likely that the copyist, piecing his skin-leaves (called 'doors' in Jer. xxxvi. 23) to form the parchment roll, mixed the parts, his mistake being perpetuated by other copyists who followed. It is also in this way probably that we are able to explain the present position of Ezra iv. 6–23 (see on), which has nothing to do with the time of Ezra or the events amid which he moved.

It seems clear that so far as biblical sources go the account of Ezra's work closes with Ezra x adding Neh. vii. $73^b$–x. Notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary (see Keil, Bertheau, Ryle, &c.) it cannot be that Ezra and Nehemiah were both present at Jerusalem during the course of the events narrated in Neh. vii. $73^b$–x, though it is quite certain that Ezra was, and held the first place.

### CONSPECTUS OF THE CHIEF EVENTS IN EZRA'S LIFE

according to Ezra vii–x and Neh. vii. $73^b$–x, attaching Ezra iv. 7–23 to the records of a later time, perhaps to the events among which Nehemiah moved.

1. Ezra and his party begin the journey from Babylon (vii. 6 f., viii. 15, 31).

Date: year, the 7th of Artaxerxes I (458 B.C.); month, 1st; day, 1st.

2. They reach Jerusalem (vii. 8 f.).

Date: year, same; month, 5th; day, 1st.

3. A three days' rest, on the 4th day gifts and offerings being presented for the Temple (viii. 12).

Date: see under 2 above.

4. Ezra amazed and grieved on finding that many of the Jews had married heathen women (ix).

Date: None given, but this must belong to the days immediately following the arrival. The evil was too palpable and serious to escape the vigilant eye and the uncompromising orthodoxy of Ezra.

5. Appointment of a commission to inquire into the matter and to report (x. 1–16).

Date: year, 7th of Artaxerxes I; month, 10th (Tebet); day, 1st.

6. The commission meet; its finding (x. 17–44).

Date: year, 8th (see above, 5); month, 1st (Nisan); day, 1st.

7. Departure of the people to their several cities—their ancestral homes (Neh. vii. 73$^b$).

Date: year, as in 6? (inferred, not stated); month, 7th (Tishri); day?

8. Public reading of the law at Jerusalem (Neh. viii. 1–12).

Date: year, 8th of Artaxerxes I (inferred, not stated); month 7th (Tishri); day, 1st. Ezra reads the law publicly the same day on the morning (?) of which the people depart for their several homes.

9. Observance of the Feast of Tabernacles (Neh. viii. 8–18).

Date: year, as in 8, above; month, 7th (Tishri); day, 15th to 22nd.

10. The people acknowledge their sin (Neh. ix) and make a vow (covenant) to put away the heathen wives (Neh. x).

Date: year, as above in 6–9; month, 7th (Tishri); day, 24th (two days after Tabernacles) and (apparently) following days.

For details as to the several episodes enumerated above see on the passages with which they are connected.

*Ezra's death.* We have no authoritative record of Ezra's career beyond what is told us in Ezra and Neh. vii. 73$^b$–x, though Josephus[1] is probably right in saying that he passed away before Nehemiah's first visit to Jerusalem. We have no definite ground for believing that they ever met, nor does either refer to the other—this is quite in the manner of Israel's ancient leaders (e.g Micah and Isaiah, &c.).

When and where Ezra died we are not reliably informed, though Jewish tradition has, with its usual readiness and fertility of resource supplied what history lacks. Summing up the work of Ezra Josephus[2] says: 'After he had obtained this reputation among the people he died an old man and was buried in a magnificent manner at Jerusalem.' He is said in the Talmud to have breathed his last at Zamzagu on the Tigris while on his way from Jerusalem to Susa, whither he was journeying for the purpose of conferring with Artaxerxes about Jewish affairs. His monument on the bank of the Lower Tigris is still shown and greatly revered by Eastern Jews.

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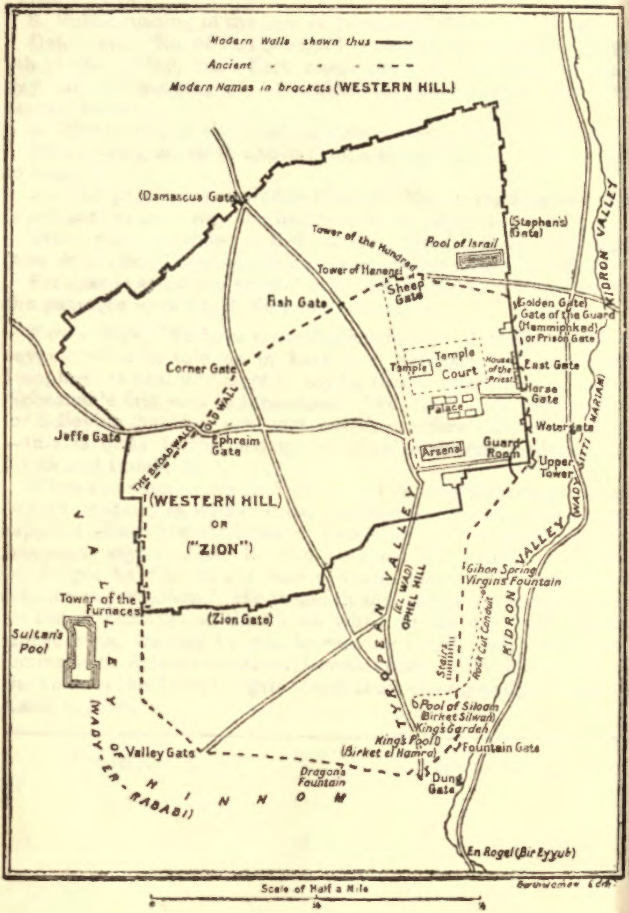
[1] *Antiq.* x. 5.

[2] *Antiq.* x. 5. 5.

# PLAN OF JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF NEHEMIAH.


Modern Walls shown thus
Ancient
Modern Names in brackets (WESTERN HILL)
(Damascus Gate)
Tower of the Hundred
Tower of Hananel
Pool of Israel
(Stephen's) Gate
Sheep Gate
Fish Gate
(Golden Gate)
Gate of the Guard (Hammiphkad) or Prison Gate
KIDRON VALLEY
Temple
Temple Court
House of the Priests
East Gate
Corner Gate
Horse Gate
Palace
OLD WALL
THE BROAD WALL
Jaffa Gate
Ephraim Gate
Water gate
Arsenal
Guard Room
Upper Tower
(WADY SITTI MARIAM)
(WESTERN HILL) OR ("ZION")
VALLEY
TYROPEAN VALLEY
(EL WAD)
OPHEL HILL
KIDRON VALLEY
Gihon Spring
Virgins Fountain
Tower of the Furnaces
(Zion Gate)
Sultan's Pool
Stairs
Rock Cut Conduit
Pool of Siloam
Birket Silwan
King's Garden
King's Pool
(Birket el Hamra)
Fountain Gate
Valley Gate
Dragon's Fountain
Dung Gate
VALLEY OF HINNOM
(WADY-ER-RABABI)
En Rogel (Bir Eyyub)
Bartholomew Edin.
Scale of Half a Mile

# NEHEMIAH

### General outline of Nehemiah (omitting vii. $73^b$–x).

1. Neh. i. 1–vii. 5: Nehemiah's description in the first person the earlier of his two journeys from Persia to Jerusalem. This rrative, so simple, naïve, and homogeneous, has hardly ever been estioned.

2. Neh. vii. 6–$73^a$: List of Jews who returned from Babylon ased on Ezra ii).

3. xi–xii. 26: Several lists.

4. xii. 27–43: Dedication of the walls of Jerusalem.

5. xii. 44–47: Organization of the Levites. Measures for their pport.

6. xiii. 1–3: Separation of Israelites from people of mixed ood.

7. xiii. 4–9: Nehemiah's second visit to Jerusalem. Expulsion Tobiah from the Temple; sanctity of the latter maintained.

8. xiii. 10–14: Measures for the support of the Levites, see 5.

9. xiii. 15–22: Means employed for securing the observance of e Sabbath.

10. xiii. 23–29: Vigorous protest of Nehemiah against mixed arriages.

11. xiii. 30 f.: *Résumé* of Nehemiah's work.

### Between Ezra and Nehemiah.

It is assumed throughout the present volume that Ezra and ehemiah were never at any time contemporaries at Jerusalem see p. 157 f.).

Between Ezra x, adding Neh. vii. $73^b$–x and Neh. i. 1 there is o historical connexion, and a space of some ten years must lie etween. One may compare the break here with that between zra vi and vii, though the gap in the latter is much wider. erhaps portions of Ezra-Nehemiah which dealt with the ntervening years in both cases have been lost.

So far as concerns Ezra's own work it may be legitimate to onclude that it came to an end with what is told us in Neh. x or viii ?).

The evils of mixed marriages had been dealt with and to a large

1 [N] The [a] words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah.
Now it came to pass in the month Chislev, [b] in th

[a] Or, *history*

[b] See ch. ii. 1.

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extent mitigated. Ezra had probably died (say about 457 B. C.) for in the history of Nehemiah's work at Jerusalem (Neh. i–vii. 5 he is not mentioned, nor elsewhere after 457 B. C.

In Neh. i. 1 we are all at once transported to 445 B. C., th year of Nehemiah's first arrival at Jerusalem. What happene in this interval of some dozen years? For the answer we are lef largely to conjecture. Probably Ezra iv. 6–23 (see on) belong here. The Jews seem to have set about the restoration of th walls of Jerusalem, perhaps before Ezra passed away, and at hi instigation. But the Samaritan party became once more a sourc of annoyance and a hindrance to their pious kinsmen, and, makin sundry charges of disloyalty, &c., against the Jews, induced th Persian king to issue an edict putting an end for the time to th work and (probably) imposing fresh burdens and disabilities upo the builders. It is to these latter that Neh. i. 3 seems to allude.

It has been objected that if previous attempts at repairing th wall had been made they would have been mentioned in Neh. i 3 ff. Moreover (it is added), if earlier prohibitory edicts ha been issued their withdrawal would have been spoken of whe Nehemiah is allowed to begin the work. It is forgotten, howeve that in Ezra-Nehemiah we have what is evidently but an imperfe sketch of the history of the time, a collection of fragments fro which it would be perilous to draw *a priori* conclusions.

### I. 1–11. NEHEMIAH'S SORROW AND PRAYER.

1–3. *Nehemiah receives bad tidings concerning the Jerusalem Jew*

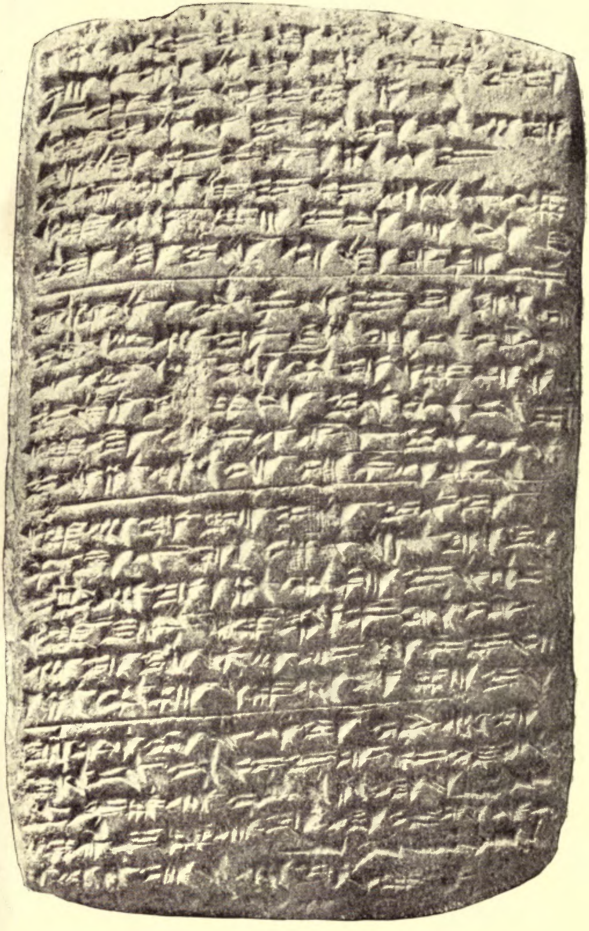
**1. The words of . . . Hacaliah:** the original heading Nehemiah's autobiography (i. 1–vii. 5).

**words:** better 'acts' (cf. 1 Kings xi. 41 'the acts Solomon') or as (R. Vm.) 'history.' But the Hebrew is neutr and can in itself bear any one of the above renderings.

**Nehemiah:** the Heb. = ('one whom) Yahweh comforts'; c the meaning of Ezra 'one whom Yahweh helps.' See on Ez vii. 1. We read of two others bearing the name 'Nehemia (see iii. 16 and Ezra ii. 2).

**Hacaliah:** read (with Böhme, Cheyne, and Budde), 'Khal kelᵉyah' ('= trust in Yah').

**Chislev:** Assyr. *Kisliwu*, the ninth month (= our Nov.-Dec. After the return from Babylon the Jews adopted the Babylonia (Assyrian) month-names instead of their own. See (for bot sets of names) Schürer(4), i. 744 ff. (E.V. I. ii. 763 ff.) and c Ezra x. 17.



An Old-world Letter.
(Tablet from Tell el Amarna).

wentieth year, as I was in Shushan the [a] palace, that 2
Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men
out of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews
hat had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and
concerning Jerusalem. And they said unto me, The 3

[a] Or, *castle*

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**in the twentieth year**: these words are a dittograph from i. 1, or, more likely, they occur instead of a lower number (19th ?) hrough a copyist passing his eye to the beginning of the next chapter. If we retain the M.T. ch. ii is chronologically prior to ch. i, as the first month (Nisan, ii. 1) precedes the ninth (Chislev, i. 1). But the contents of these chapters make this supposition impossible. See on ii. 1 for the king whose reign is meant.

**Shushan** = Susa, the capital of ancient Elam, made by Cyrus one of the capitals of the Persian kingdom. Other capitals were Ecbatana, Persepolis, and Babylon. The king held his court at each of these, perhaps alternately. They were really former royal residences of kingdoms once independent. Shushan (Susa), east of the Persian Gulf, is represented by the modern mound of Shush, fifteen miles south-west of Dizful in Persia.

**palace:** R. Vm. 'castle,' *Luc.* and some MSS. of the LXX *baris.* The Hebrew word seems to denote a fortified place, and hence is applied to the fortified portion of Susa here, in Esther, and also in Dan. viii. 2. In ii. 8, vii. 2 it is used for the citadel or castle of Jerusalem, in 1 Chron. xxix. 1 of the Jerusalem Temple, and in the Sachau papyri (i. 1) Yeb (Elephantinê) and Syenê are so designated.

In Esther ix 'Susa the fortress' is distinguished from Susa the city proper (verses 13–15). Recent discoveries show that the fortified part of the city was separated from the rest of Susa by the river Choaspes. See on Esther ii. 5 and note by Driver on Dan. viii. 27 (*Camb. Bible*).

**2.** (Hanani, one of my) **brethren**: render 'brothers'; a literal brother is meant as vii. 2 shows.

**the Jews . . . escaped . . . captivity**: those of the Babylonian exiles who had come to Jerusalem, the remnant of such. No one without a previously adopted theory to maintain (as Kosters, &c.) would interpret these words as referring to Jews who had never left the home-land, holding that as yet no return had taken place. According to Kosters and v. Hoonacker the first return of exiles was under Ezra, who is held to have laboured subsequently to Nehemiah, see p. 25 ff.

**3.** The reference seems to be to the situation implied in Ezra iv. 7–23, see above, p. 84 f.

remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are
4 burned with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days; and I fasted and prayed before the God of
5 heaven, and said, I beseech thee, O LORD, the God of

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Kosters[1] and Marquart[2] say that it is to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. that this verse refers. But this cannot be.

1. The event implied must be something recent or Nehemiah could not have been surprised to hear of it. How could Nehemiah in 445 be astonished at hearing of the great ruin of Jerusalem and its Temple 140 years and more ago?

2. Nehemiah would be sure to know of the royal edict stopping the building of the walls (Ezra vi. 17 ff.), yet he could hardly at so great a distance have known of the sufferings of the Jews at home or the actual condition of the city.

3. There seems to be in Neh. vi. 6 an underlying reference to an earlier edict against the building of the walls: 'It is reported . . . that thou and the Jews think to rebel' (against the royal edict, &c.).

**the province:** see on Ezra ii. 1.

**in great affliction,** &c. to end: see ii. 3, 17.

**wall . . . broken down:** to make further defiance impossible: see 2 Kings xiv. 13.

4–11. *Nehemiah's grief; his confession and prayer, both the latter bearing a strong liturgical character.*

**4.** With Nehemiah's manifestations of grief compare those of Ezra (Ezra ix. 3–5, x. 6).

**sat down:** see Job ii. 13.

**certain** (days): better 'some (= 'a few') days.'

**the God of heaven:** see on Ezra vi. 9.

**5. O LORD:** Heb. Yahweh (Jehovah), always in the E.VV. written LORD with small capitals except in four (R.V. six) places, where Jehovah occurs. For some centuries B.C. this sacred name was avoided, and instead of it the Hebrew word for Lord (*Adonai*) substituted as is the custom among modern Jews. It is this substituted word which is translated in the LXX and other versions (not the French). This is, however, the only example of the use in Nehemiah of this Divine name. It is the distinctive name for Israel's God as such.

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[1] *op. cit.* p. 60.

[2] *op. cit.* p. 57 f.

heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his
commandments: let thine ear now be attentive, and 6
thine eyes open, that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee at this time, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, while I confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: yea, I and my father's
house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against 7
thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgements, which thou commandedst
thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech thee, the 8
word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye trespass, I will scatter you abroad among the peoples:

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**the great and terrible God:** see iv. 14, ix. 32; Deut. vii. 21, x. 17; Dan. ix. 4.

**that keepeth covenant,** &c.: see ix. 32; Deut. vii. 9; 1 Kings viii. 23, &c.

**6. let thine ear now be attentive:** so ver. 11; 2 Chron. vi. 40; Ps. cxxx. 2. The **now** of this verse is that of entreaty (Heb. *na*), not the *now* of time (Heb. *'atah*).

**thine eyes open:** so 2 Chron. vi. 40.

**thy servant** = 'me' with the added feeling of humility. In respectful address to a superior the word servant is often used to form personal pronouns. Thus 'thy servant' = I or me (Gen. xviii. 3; 1 Sam. xx. 7 f.); 'thy servants' = we or us. See Gen. xlii. 11; Num. xxxi. 49.

**day and night:** see Acts xx. 31.

**confess . . . sins . . . which we have sinned:** see on Ezra x. 1.

**7. We** (have dealt, &c.): see on Ezra x. 1.

**commandments . . . statutes . . . judgements:** found together as summing up the law; also Deut. v. 31, vi, vii. 11, xi. For the distinction between the words, see 'Psalms' (*Century Bible*), vol. ii, p. 254.

**which thou commandedst,** &c.: see Deut. vi. 1, &c.

**8. Remember . . . the word:** nothing in the O.T. corresponds exactly to the language cited; the nearest equivalent is perhaps Deut. xxx. 1-5; cf. Deut. iv. 27, xxviii. 64. See in Ezra ix. 11 (a similar case).

**trespass:** see on Ezra x. 2.

9 but if ye return unto me, and keep my commandments
and do them, though your outcasts were in the uttermost
part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence,
and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to
10 cause my name to dwell there. Now these are thy ser-
vants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy
11 great power, and by thy strong hand. O Lord, I beseech
thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy
servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who delight to
fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this

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**9. return**: the Hebrew means primarily to make a turn, to change the direction; cf. A.V. 'turn.' But it comes to mean more usually 'return.'

**unto the place,** &c.: the phraseology is Deuteronomic, see Deut. xii. 5, &c., and cf. Ezra vi. 12. The place meant is of course Jerusalem, though it is not mentioned in connexion with the phrase, and Prof. A. Duff has ably argued that a city in the Northern Kingdom is what Deuteronomy originally intended[1].

**10.** For the phraseology see Deut. vii. 8, ix. 26, 29; and cf. Exod. iii. 19.

**redeemed**: the Hebrew word (*padah*) is used specially of freeing slaves. For other verbs so rendered see on Ps. lxxiv. 2 (*Century Bible*).

**11. O Lord**: in Nehemiah only here and iv. 8; see ver. 5 (LORD).

**thy servant . . . thy servants**: see on ver. 6. Here, as following Lord (not LORD = Yahweh), very appropriate.

Note the apparent paradox in **delight to fear,** but 'to fear God' is the O.T. expression for to reverence and obey Him. See Ps. ii. 11, xxii. 23.

**thy name** = 'thee' (with emphasis). The word name with the appropriate pronoun ('my,' 'thy,' &c.) is constantly used in the O.T. of God as an emphatic personal pronoun, 'myself,' 'thyself.' In Ps. lv. 6 'unto thee' stands in parallelism to 'unto thy name.' This usage arises from the employment of 'name' in the sense of revealed character, the person as named and thus known: see on Ps. lxxix. 9, lxxxiii. 16, cxxiv. 8 (*Century Bible*); cf. 'thy servant' in ver. 6, &c.

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[1] See *Old Test. Theology*, vol. ii, 'The Deuteronomic Reformation.'

day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. (Now I was cupbearer to the king.)

And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth **2** year of Artaxerxes the king, when wine was before him,

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**mercy:** in the Old English sense of pity, compassion. The Hebrew words here = 'make me' (lit. 'thyself,' see on ver. 6) 'to be an object of compassionate regard in the eyes of this man' (i. e. the King of Persia).

I. 11ᶜ–II (end). NEHEMIAH REQUESTS AND OBTAINS THE KING'S PERMISSION TO VISIT JERUSALEM FOR THE PURPOSE OF REBUILDING THE WALLS AND RESTORING SOCIAL ORDER.

i. 11ᶜ–ii. 8. *The king's favourable response to Nehemiah's request.*

**11. Now I was cupbearer,** &c.: these words belong to the next chapter, which it appropriately introduces.

**cupbearer:** Heb. lit. = 'one who causes' or 'gives to drink.' The absence of the definite article (though in the A.V. it is inaccurately prefixed 'the cupbearer') suggests, what is otherwise known to be the case, that the king would have two or more cupbearers who relieved one another: see 1 Kings x. 5; 2 Chron. ix. 4; Gen. xl. 2 ('chief of the cupbearers,' E.VV. wrongly 'of the butlers'); 2 Kings xviii. 17. The duties of the office are enumerated by Xenophon (*Cyro.* i. 3 f.) and by Herodotus (iii. 24). The cupbearer's principal occupation was to taste the wine before he handed it to the king, as a proof that it was free from poison (see ii. 1). Those who held the office had, at least in the time of Ktesias (d. *circa* 390 B.C.), to be eunuchs, and it is not improbable that Nehemiah was one, for we never read of his having a wife, though this last is true of Ezra too. The title *Rabshakeh* in 2 Kings xviii. 17 and the parallel passage Isa. xxxvi. 2 is Babylonian, and means 'principal military officer' (so nearly all modern scholars) and not 'cupbearer,' as Ryle, Whitehouse, and (latterly) Zimmern[1] say. Nehemiah, as cupbearer, had peculiarly favourable opportunities of becoming intimate with his royal master.

ii. 1. **the month Nisan:** see on Ezra x. 17.

**the twentieth year of Artaxerxes:** i. e. of Artaxerxes I (Longimanus), whose reign began in 464 B.C. and ended with his death in 424 B.C. The twentieth year of his reign would be therefore 444 B.C.

It was in the seventh and eighth years of the same king that Ezra accomplished his work at Jerusalem (see Conspectus, &c., p. 157 f.).

There were, however, two later Persian kings bearing the same name, viz. Artaxerxes II (Mnemon, 404–359 B.C.) and Artaxerxes III (Ochus 359–338). Since the bare name is used in Ezra

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[1] *KAT.*$^{(3)}$ 651.

that I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now
2 I had not been *beforetime* sad in his presence. And the
king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing
thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of
3 heart. Then I was very sore afraid. And I said unto the
king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my
countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my
fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof

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and here, much discussion has arisen as to which is intended (see on Ezra vii. 1). There has been similar disputing as to the Darius of Ezra iv. 24, v. 1, &c., since there were other Persian kings of that name: see on the above passages.

(when wine was before) **him:** read (with LXX) 'me' = 'when I had charge of the wine' (Siegfried, &c.). The error in Hebrew arose through a haplography, i. e. writing the same letter (*waw*) twice, a common clerical mistake.

**Now I had not,** &c.: read and render, 'Now I had not been beforetime sad,' omitting **in his presence** and removing the italics from **beforetime.** The difference in Hebrew is in one only of the consonants. The M. T. = 'Now I was not sad in his presence,' which contradicts the facts.

**2. Why is thy countenance sad?** &c.: the cupbearer was expected to be cheerful and cheering. That Nehemiah's sadness was not due to physical illness was proved by his appearance and the fact that he had not requested leave of absence.

**sorrow of heart:** i. e. 'sadness,' &c., the noun being cognate with the adjective rendered 'sad.' In 1 Sam. xvii. 28 the same Hebrew words are rightly rendered 'naughtiness of heart.' Both adjective and noun have primarily ethical meanings. Cf. our 'bad' or 'good health,' 'bad' or 'good tidings,' &c.

**Then I was very sore afraid,** lest, having explained his trouble and his request, the king might deny him the favour it was in his mind to ask.

**3. Let the king live for ever:** the usual formula at the opening of an address to the king: see Dan. ii. 4, iii. 9. See also 1 Kings i. 31 (Bathsheba to Solomon).

**the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres:** Nehemiah was therefore a Jerusalemite by descent, i. e. he belonged to the tribe of Judah.

**place:** in Hebrew the word used for house, but also for a containing place or space, e. g. Isa. iii. 20, 'perfumed boxes,' lit. 'houses of perfume'; Exod. xxvi. 29, xxxv. 34, 'places ('houses') for the bars'; Ezek. xli. 9, 'place ('house') of the side cham-

are consumed with fire? Then the king said unto me, 4
For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the
God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please 5
the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy
sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the
city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. And 6
the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,)
For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou

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bers.' Cf. also the numerous place-names compounded with *Beth* (house), as Bethlehem = 'House of Bread,' i. e. place where wheat is abundant, &c.

Ryle and Bertholet are hardly justified in pressing the literal sense 'house,' from the fathers having been buried in the house (cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 1; 1 Kings ii. 34), i. e. in the garden attached to the house (cf. 2 Kings xxi. 18).

The ancients attached great importance to the honour of proper interment, and paid the deepest respect to the burial-places of ancestors. See on Ps. lxxix. 3 (*Century Bible*).

**consumed:** lit. 'eaten,' as in ver. 13. In ver. 17, i. 3, &c., the word is 'burnt.'

**4. For what dost thou make request?** Either Nehemiah had indicated in words that he had a request to make or his appearance suggested the king's question.

**I prayed:** i. e. inwardly. Nehemiah was pre-eminently a man of prayer; see iv. 4, 9, v. 19, vi. 9, 14, xiii. 14.

**God of heaven:** see on Ezra vi. 9.

**5. If it please the king,** &c.: the regular formula when making proposals to the king. It occurs very often in Esther (see i. 19, iii. 9, &c.).

**build:** the Hebrew word means also, as here, 'to rebuild.' So Ezra v. 13, 15, 17, vi. 3, &c. Here it refers specifically to the repairing of the walls, as in Ezra iv. 12, 16, 21.

**6. the queen,** &c: the queen (called Damasias according to Ktesias) here separately mentioned on account of the influence she had over her husband. Cf. Queen Esther and the part she played in directing her husband's policy. Persian kings acted much as their queens guided them.

The word rendered **queen** occurs besides only in Ps. xlv. 9, and judging from Assyrian etymology it denotes strictly a member of the royal harem, a palace woman. But it was the principal member who acted as queen, she having all the more influence because she owed her supreme position to her continued charms. Such a woman had in those times far more completely the ear and heart of the husband than a one-wife queen could have.

return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set
7 him a time. Moreover I said unto the king, If it please
the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond
the river, that they may let me pass through till I come
8 unto Judah; and a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the
king's [a] forest, that he may give me timber to make beams
for the gates of the castle which appertaineth to the house,

[a] Or, *park*

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**I set him:** better read with Winckler[1], 'he set me.'

**time:** a period of twelve years—the space of Nehemiah's first absence—could hardly have been in the mind of either the king or his cupbearer. It probably grew to that through unexpected difficulties in the building and in the administration.

**7. letters:** see on Ezra iv. 8. The letters would be written in Aramaic, the language of diplomacy at this time, see p. 13. We are probably to think of parchment rolls as the material (see Jer. xxxvi. 1, 2, 4), ink (Jer. xxxvi. 18), and an iron stylus (Jer. xvii. 1) or reed pen (Ezek. ix. 2) being employed in writing. See on Ezra iv. 8. The Tel-el-Amarna tablets prove that in 1400 B.C. letters were written on clay tablets dried in the sun or baked in a kiln, and that they were in the cuneiform character. The Tel-el-Amarna letters were baked in kilns, see on Ezra vi. 2.

**governors beyond the river:** the 'pekhahs' or 'governors of Transpotamia': see on Ezra iv. 10 (for the designation Transpotamia) and on Ezra viii. 36 and ver. 9 (for governors, &c.).

**that they may let me pass,** &c.: suggesting the existence among the governors of a feeling of opposition to the project Nehemiah had at heart. See on Ezra iv. 7–23, and at p. 160, where it is held that this section belongs to a time not long before Nehemiah's first visit.

**8. Asaph:** otherwise unknown. The name suggests that he was a Jew, and therefore probably a native of Jerusalem.

**king's forest:** since Ewald's time most scholars identify this with the 'Garden of Solomon,' close to Etam, some half-dozen miles to the south of Jerusalem (see Josephus, *Antiq.*, viii. 7, 3). The forest of Lebanon is too far away to be intended here; the timber wanted must have been near.

The word rendered **forest** is the Hebrew form of 'paradise,' originally a Persian word. The same word in Eccles. ii. 5 and Cant. iv. 13 means 'park.'

**for the gates of:** Mommert (iv. 4) connects these words with wall and house, rendering 'for the gates of the castle . . . and for

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[1] *Altor. Forsch.* ii, Series iii, 2. 473.

and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall
enter into. And the king granted me, according to the
good hand of my God upon me. Then I came to the 9
governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's

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the city wall and for the house,' &c. But the Hebrew cannot yield this translation.

**the castle:** Heb. *hab-birah*, as in ver. 1 (see on). A fortress on the north side of the Temple, first mentioned here and vii. 2. It is referred to later in 1 Macc. xiii. 52; Acts xxi. 37 and xxii. 24. It seems to have been erected between 536 and 445, probably at the time the Temple was restored about 520, though nothing more definite is known. Later names were Baris and Antonia (see Josephus, *Wars*, i. 3, 3, &c.). Mommert, curiously (iv. 4), understands by the castle the whole wall-enclosed Temple area.

**according to the good hand of my God:** see ver. 18 and Ezra vii. 6, viii. 18, 22.

9-16. *Nehemiah's arrival at Jerusalem; his tour of the city and his impressions.*

**9. governors beyond the river:** since Transpotamia ('beyond the river') had but one satrap, the word 'governors' must, as in the Sachau papyri, include the local governors appointed by the satrap, often, as in the case of Ezra and Nehemiah, and in accordance with Persian policy, one of the race inhabiting the subsatrapy. The use of the word *pekhah* (plur. here) proves that it does not invariably mean, as Meyer holds, satrap. When for purposes of administration Darius I divided his greatly extended kingdom into twenty satrapies, carrying out more fully the policy of Cyrus, he made Babylon and Assyria one satrapy, Syria, Phoenicia, and the island of Cyprus another, and Egypt with contiguous lands a third[1]. On crossing the Euphrates Nehemiah would pass through one satrapy only until he reached Jerusalem: see p. 50. On his way from Shushan he would be likely to make a halt at Babylon, where a satrap resided. The letters referred to in ver. 7 would include one to this satrap.

Leaving Babylon and crossing the Euphrates, he would be at once in what the present writer calls Transpotamia. The direction would now lie towards Carchemish, avoiding the Arabian and Syrian deserts. Thence the party would turn southwards to Damascus, where the satrap of Transpotamia almost certainly dwelt, though before reaching the Syrian capital he would be likely to encounter local governors, Arab sheikhs, &c., to whom he would present what one may call royal passports. Then the company would strike

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[1] See Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, iv. 523 ff. (E.V. vi. 315 ff.); Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, iii. 49 ff.

letters. Now the king had sent with me captains of the
10 army and horsemen. And when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it

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southward in the direction of Samaria, taking, it is probable, the west Jordan route, or perhaps that east of the Jordan, crossing the river at one of the fords between the sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. At Samaria Nehemiah would meet the local sub-satrap or governor, who was probably Sanballat. To the latter he would present the usual credentials which, as explaining the purpose of Nehemiah's journey, would awaken in the local authorities the liveliest feelings of antagonism, for it was but recently (see pp. 84 f. and 160) that they had thwarted the execution of the very task which the new Jewish leader had royal authority to complete.

**captains,** &c.: Ezra made his journey without a military escort (Ezra viii. 22), perhaps, as Bertheau says, because he was ashamed as a professed believer in Yahweh to question the sufficiency of Divine guidance.

**10. Sanballat:** the best Heb. MSS. write 'Saneballat.' In the LXX and Vulg. it is 'Sanaballat' (one *l* in *Luc.*), in Josephus 'Sanaballet(es).' The word is Babylonian, and means 'one whom Sin' (the Moon-god) 'preserves alive.'

There can now be no doubt that Sanballat was governor, i.e. sub-satrap in Samaria, exercising at the time, it is extremely likely, jurisdiction over Judah and even over other adjoining districts (see iv. 7, Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites). He is spoken of in the Sachau papyri as governor (*pekhah*) of Samaria, and Josephus says[2] (though his date is wrong, see p. 179) that he was sent by 'the last king' (Darius Codomannus, 338-331) 'into Samaria.' Nehemiah nowhere calls Sanballat governor, yet he brings him into connexion with Samaria (see iv. 2).

**the Horonite:** this is generally held to mean a native of Beth-Horon, north-west of Jerusalem, at that time belonging to Samaria (see Joshua xvi. 3, 5, &c.). This agrees with what Josephus says[3] ('He was a Kuthean'), and with iv. 2 properly interpreted (see on). Moreover, the language in iv. 2 suggests that he spoke to the Samaritans in their own (his own ?) language. So Buhl[4] and G. A. Smith[5].

Schlatter, Winckler, and Bertholet say that the word denotes 'a native of Horonaim,' a south Moabite city (see Isa. xv. 5; Jer. xlviii. 3, 5, 34, and the Moabite stone). This is thought to explain why he constantly appears in conjunction with Tobiah the Ammonite, but see below.

**Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite:** the fact that his

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[1] § 29.
[2] *Antiq.* xi. 7, 2.
[3] Ibid.
[4] *Geog. des alt. Pal.* 169.
[5] *Jerusalem*, ii. 336 f.

grieved them exceedingly, for that there was come a man
to seek the welfare of the children of Israel. So I came 11
to Jerusalem, and was there three days. And I arose in 12
the night, I and some few men with me; neither told

name and that of his son are compounded with Yah (short writing of Yahweh) shows that he was a Yahweh worshipper, though it is no proof of his being a Jew. Those who belonged to the Samaritan party were genuine Yahwists or they would not have wished to unite in restoring the Temple. They differed from Jews in having wider sympathies and a broader creed, and also in having foreign blood. We know of them almost exclusively from what their rivals have written. It is hardly likely that 'Ammonite' means here, as G. A. Smith is inclined to think[1], a native of the Benjamite village Chephar-ammoni (Joshua xviii. 24), as the word occurs often elsewhere and invariably in the ordinary sense. Besides, according to xiii. 4 ff., he was not of Jewish descent. Why should not this man, though racially an Ammonite, having entered the service of a Yahwist, have embraced his master's religion and then changed his name according to a common custom?

**servant:** the word so translated means often a slave (Gen. xii. 16; Exod. xxi. 2, &c.), but it is also commonly used for officials of the court (see Gen. xl. 20, l. 7; Exod. x. 7, &c.) and for other officials of quite respectable position (see 2 Sam. x. 2, 4, royal messengers, &c.).

It is probable that Tobiah was the secretary of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria: see vi. 17. The word translated 'servant' is by no means inconsistent with this. Winckler's guess[2] (it is no more) that Tobiah was Sanballat's son is not worthy of serious consideration.

**it grieved them,** &c., because their former successful opposition was now apparently to come to nought: see p. 160.

**a man:** Heb. 'a human being' (= Gr. *anthropos*, L. *homo*), used contemptuously. The ordinary word for man as distinguished from woman is *ish* (= Gr. *aner*, L. *vir*). Perhaps, however, the sense is 'that any one (man or woman) had come,' &c.; the use of the same Hebrew word in ver. 12 favours the latter explanation.

**11.** Nehemiah took no notice of the Samaritan ill-will, but went on his way. With the royal letters even Sanballat could not hinder his progress.

With ver. 11 cf. Ezra viii. 32, which is almost word for word the same.

**12. in the night:** to avoid being seen.

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[1] See *Encyc. Bib.* i. 559.

[2] *KAT.*$^{(3)}$ 296.

I any man what my God put into my heart to do for Jeru-
salem: neither was there any beast with me, save the
13 beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night by the
valley gate, even toward the dragon's well, and to the

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**what my God put into my heart:** see vii. 5 and Ezra vii. 27.

**the beast that I rode upon:** i. e. an ass, less likely a mule. The Hebrew word is a generic one for horses, asses, and mules, and has nearly always a collective sense. Nehemiah had but one animal, to obviate suspicion; his servants would walk, just as is done in Palestine at the present time.

13–15. *Nehemiah's tour of inspection.* It will be seen that he began and ended at the Valley Gate, having made, it is probable, a complete circuit of the city wall. Dr. E. Robinson[1] held that Nehemiah, when he reached the King's Pool (ver. 14), descended from the beast, which was hindered from going further by the ruin heaps, and proceeded along the Kidron way, looking at the Temple walls, &c. Returning to where he left his beast, he made the journey back to the Valley Gate by the way he came. So Professor F. F. Wright, who says[2] that having approached the city wall by the northern road Nehemiah had no further need to examine the northern walls. If, as the present writer believes, Nehemiah followed the entire course of the wall, one must think of him as on foot guiding the beast where the heaps of débris made riding impossible. See a further statement of various views in Mommert, vol. (*Theil*) iv. 5 ff. We have in these verses, in iii. 1–32 and in xii. 27–43, the completest data to be obtained for reconstructing the plan of ancient Jerusalem. Notwithstanding the mass of learned and ingenious matter which has been written on these chapters, much uncertainty still attaches to details. References might be made to the large volume with a small volume as appendix by Carl Mommert, *Topographie des alten Jerusalem* (1900–1907); *Jerusalem*, &c., by George Adam Smith, D.D., 2 vols. (1907); *Ancient Jerusalem*, by Selah Merrill (1908), and L. B. Paton, *Jerusalem in Bible Times.* Dr. Smith's work canno be too highly commended for its sanity, learning, and interesting style: see especially vol. i. 31 ff. As a guide to the notes t these topographical sections the map of Jerusalem in the time o Nehemiah will, it is thought, be found useful, see opposite p. 159

**13. valley gate:** the name suggests that this gate opene upon the Valley of Hinnom (*Wady-er-Rababi*), the word trans lated 'valley' (*gai*) being used in the O. T. of this one only o dung gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were

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[1] *Bib. Researches*, i. 474.

[2] *PEF.*, 1896, 172 f.

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the Jerusalem valleys[1]. It must have lain near the south-west corner of the walls. In 1894 Dr. Bliss[2] uncovered the remains of an ancient gateway at the south-west corner of the ancient walls which he, Guthe, Mitchell, and G. A. Smith concluded to be the site of this gate, though the distance from the Dung Gate is rather more than 1,000 cubits (see iii. 33), and further excavation has shown that the remains are not very ancient. Formerly this gate was placed where the Jaffa Gate now stands: so Thenius, Keil, Schick, Ryle, and Harvie-Jellie (on 2 Chron. xxvi. 9, *Century Bible*).

**the dragon's well:** we know it lay somewhere along the direction of the wall between the Valley and Dung Gates, but where exactly we have no data to determine. It has been commonly identified with the modern *Bir Eyyûb* (Job's Well), which probably represents the site of En-Rogel (see 1 Kings i. 9, &c.), but this would be too far to the south-east and not along the lie of wall. Perhaps, as G. A. Smith[3] surmises, it was a spring, due to an earthquake, and only temporary in duration, for it is not mentioned before or after the time of Nehemiah. It may have received its name from the belief that a mythical dragon resided in the fountain: so W. Rob. Smith, *Rel. Sem.*$^{(2)}$ 172, and most moderns: but this is very problematical. The LXX calls it 'the Fig Fountain,' which may be correct, i. e. 'the fountain near which figs grow.' *Luc.* supports the M. T. The Hebrew is much alike for both. The Syr. renders, 'the Gate of the Hills.'

**the dung gate:** situated probably near the point where the Tyropoeon Valley (*el-Wad*) joins the Valley of Hinnom (*Wady-er-Rababi*), perhaps where the modern *Bab-el-Magharibe* stands. Some identify this gate with the Harsith Gate (Gate of Potsherds) mentioned in Jer. xix. 2. This last was perhaps the gate through which potsherds were thrown, or rather, outside which on a rock, as now, broken earthenware was crushed into cement for plastering cisterns, &c.[4] The name Dung Gate (Heb. and Syr., 'Ashheap Gate'; *Luc.*, LXX, Vulg., 'Dung Hill Gate') may have been given, as Stade and others after him say, because the refuse of the city was conveyed through it. Gall,[5] followed hesitatingly by Bertholet, sees in the Hebrew name a disguised form of Tophet,[6] itself a disguised form of Tephet, and so explains: 'The Gate leading to the Molek (a disguised form of *melek*[7]) sanctuary where children were sacrificed.'

**and viewed:** the Hebrew tense is continuous = 'I kept on

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[1] See G. A. Smith, *Jerus.* i. 171. [2] *PEF.*, 1894, 149 ff., 243 ff.

[3] *op. cit.* i. 74, cf. 111.

[4] *PEF.*, 1904, p. 156. [5] *Altis. Kult.*, 72.

[6] See on Ps. cvi. 38 (*Century Bible*).

[7] See on Ps. cxxxii. 2 (*Century Bible*).

broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed wit
14 fire. Then I went on to the fountain gate and to th
king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that wa
15 under me to pass. Then went I up in the night by th

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viewing.' The Hebrew verb as written in the M. T. (so LXX means 'to break,' and has been here explained: 'I broke m way through the walls,' i. e. the fragments of walls. Rash interprets literally, and says that Nehemiah's purpose was t break down the portions of wall that remained, so that next da the Jews might be willing to assent to his proposal—a ver unlikely thing for him to do. By changing a diacritical point o one letter (*sh*, *s*)—making no difference in the original unpointe Hebrew text—we obtain an Aramaic verb, which occur in the intensive form (*Pi.*) in the sense to hope, wait fo (see Esther ix. 1; Ps. civ. 21, cix. 166, cxlv. 15; Isa. xxxviii. 18) But the sense 'think,' then (with the preposition here) to 'thinl about,' though upheld by Baer, Ginsburg, and Guthe, cannot b got from the Aramaic, in which the simple verb means 't believe,' 'trust,' and the intensive (*Pa.*) 'to hope for,' nor fron the O. T. passages cited above, in which the verb (*Pi.*) = 't hope,' 'wait for.' Either we must keep the verb in the M. T and explain as above, 'to break through' = to make way amon (the walls), or we must decide the text to be corrupt. Perhap we should read *shomer* for *shober*, which requires very littl change in the Hebrew. This verb means often 'to closel scrutinize,' as in 1 Sam. i. 12; Job xxxix. 1, &c. The prepositio following often introduces the object.

**walls:** so Heb., M. T., Syr., and *Luc.* But LXX an Vulg. have the sing. 'wall.'

**consumed:** see on ver. 3.

**14. fountain gate:** probably the gate which lay just outside th King's Pool, whence it had its name. It lay at the junction of th Hinnom and Kidron valleys, at the southernmost end of what wa once a busy street. It would be a little to the north-east of th Dung Gate: see plan of Jerusalem opposite p. 159.

**the king's pool:** probably = the modern *Birket-el-Hamr* ('the Red Pool'): see plan of Jerusalem, opposite p. 159. It seem to have received its name from the fact that it stood near th entrance to the royal gardens which it watered: see 2 King xxv. 4; Jer. xxxix. 4, lii. 7.

**no place,** &c.: on account of the broken-down walls.

**the beast that was under me:** i. e. so long as I rode.

**to pass:** lit. 'to cross,' 'pass over,' referring to the rubbisl in the way. See on Esther iv. 17.

rook, and viewed the wall; and I turned back, and
ntered by the valley gate, and so returned. And the 16
rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither
ad I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to
he nobles, nor to the [a] rulers, nor to the rest that did the
ork. Then said I unto them, Ye see the evil case that 17

[a] Or, *deputies*

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**15. in the night:** it was still night, and Nehemiah wishes to ay stress on this. The Palestine night varies only between eleven nd thirteen hours.

**the brook:** better 'wady': the Hebrew word (*nakhal*) = the Arabic *wady*, i. e. a winter torrent valley. This is the word lways used of the Kidron, which must therefore be here meant. *ai'*, the word in the phrase 'Valley of Hinnom,' denotes a arrower opening and one without a brook. Nehemiah went up he Kidron valley, from which he could, especially on the higher round, have a good view of the Temple wall and of much of the emple itself.

**turned back:** Heb. 'turned,' that is its primary sense and its ense here. Having passed through the wady, he would, following the wall, make a tour towards the east, encompassing the alls until he was once more at the Valley Gate.

**and so returned:** the verb is here rightly translated. It is trick of the author, a word-play, to use the same verb in two ifferent senses in the same paragraph.

16–18. *The Jews, on hearing Nehemiah explain his project, agree eartily to co-operate with him.*

**16. rulers:** Heb. (*seganim*) equivalent in this book to the ord so common in Ezra and translated 'princes': see on Ezra x. 1. Nehemiah brought it from Persia, though it is of abylonian origin. It occurs but once in Ezra (ix. 2), and hen almost certainly as a gloss.

**nobles:** lit. 'freedmen,' Nehemiah's equivalent for 'elders' see on Ezra x. 8). It occurs in the Sachau papyri (i. 19), Bagohi (governor of Judah) and the *Khorim'* (not as Sachau *hērim*) 'of the Jews,' where 'elders' makes good sense.

**nor to the rest,** &c.: render, 'nor to the others who had been oing the work.' The Heb. permits this rendering, and the sense equires it. The reference is to what had been done before Nehemiah's arrival, but was stopped by the Samaritan party (see p. 160). here is not the slightest need to explain with Meyer and Bertholet, the others who were performing the religious rites of the Jews.'

**17.** See on ver. 3.

we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gat
thereof are burned with fire: come and let us bui
up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a r
18 proach. And I told them of the hand of my God whi
was good upon me; as also of the king's words that
had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up a
build. So they strengthened their hands for the go
19 *work.* But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobi
the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabia
heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, a
said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel agai
20 the king? Then answered I them, and said unto the
The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we

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**18. rise:** see on Ezra x. 4. 'Let us set about building,' &
**So they strengthened,** &c.: better (with *Luc.*, LXX, Vul
not Syr.) passive: 'So their hands were strengthened,' &c. S
for the antithetic phrase Ezra iv. 4.

19. *Opposition.*

For **Sanballat** and **Tobiah** see on ver. 10.

**Geshem**: see vi. 2 and 6. In the latter verse it has t
form 'Gashmu,' which occurs repeatedly in the Sinaitic inscr
tions[1], and should probably be read here and in vi. 2. The final *u*
the sign of the Semitic nominative, of which there are survivals
the O. T. (see G. K., § 90 n.). He seems like Tobiah[2] to ha
accepted the religion of the Samaritans and to be now identifi
with them against the Jews. He might have been head of a cl
which had settled in Samaria. We know that Sargon transplant
the Arab tribe Thamud to Samaria. There is a third alternativ
Geshem might have been commissioned by his tribe, still dwelli
in their Arab homeland, to represent them in Samaria's oppositi
to the Jews. In either of the two latter alternatives the Arabs,
whom Geshem was chief, might have accepted Samaritanism a
religion, or their opposition might have been due to a gene
uprising of the peoples around against the Jews and th
designs.

**will ye rebel?** In reference probably to the corresponden
recorded in Ezra iv. 7–23. See esp. ver. 15.

20. *Nehemiah's answer of faith.*

**The God of heaven:** see on Ezra vi. 9.

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[1] See Euting, No. 58, 167, 345.

[2] See on ver. 10.

ervants will arise and build : but ye have no portion, nor ight, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.

**will prosper us:** see i. 11.

**his servants:** see on i. 6.

**arise:** see on Ezra x. 4.

**build:** i. e. rebuild; see on ver. 5.

**no portion:** see Joshua xx. 25; 2 Sam. xx. 1.

**right:** the Hebrew word occurs in the Sachau papyri, 27, in the sense of 'a fixed share,' which is therefore almost ertainly its meaning here.

**memorial** = 'something to be remembered by,' see Ezra xvii. 4; Num. xvi. 40, xxxi. 54; Mal. iii. 16. Had the Samaritans nd their allies been fully incorporated into the Jewish com- unity and allowed to share in the rebuilding of Temple and ity walls their names would have been handed down as those who elped in the restoration of the city and its sanctuary.

Nehemiah's reply makes it clear enough that the Samaritans ould have had no quarrel with the Jews if they had been per- itted to unite with the latter in their undertakings and privileges.

## III. NAMES OF THOSE WHO REPAIRED THE SEVERAL PORTIONS OF THE WALL.

This chapter is of the utmost importance for the understanding the topography of Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah, and uch has been written on it by scholars who have made a special tudy of the subject, such as Wilson, Warren, Guthe, Bliss, chick, G. Adam Smith. Neh. iii. 13-15 and xii. 27-43 are also great importance in the same direction.

The text in this chapter is unfortunately very corrupt in parts ee on verses 1, 9) and the account defective owing to the drop- ing out of words through the carelessness of copyists. The phraim Gate is not mentioned, though it must have been named the original account (but see on ver. 6 and on xii. 39); the escription of the east wall is evidently incomplete (see on rses 25, 27), and in several cases persons are said to have paired a second portion who are not mentioned in connexion ith a first (see on ver. 9).

It has been inferred by Torrey[1] and Kent[2], from the special atures of vocabulary and style in this section, that the Chronicler, at least another than Nehemiah, is the author. But nowhere ther in Ezra or in Nehemiah is there so detailed a description of rusalem as in this chapter, and one might expect this peculiarity

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[1] *Composition*, &c., 37 f.

[2] *Israel's Historical and Biographical Narratives*, p. 352.

3 Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethre

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of subject-matter to carry with it corresponding peculiarities language, especially where so many technical and geographic terms are employed. On the other hand, the personal note very prominent throughout, and it is clear that Nehemiah co tinues in the first person to tell his own tale.

The course taken by the description is regular, though that h been denied. The following outline sets forth the probable dire tion taken by the narrator in the account he gives. Verses 1- deal with the north wall.

1. The Sheep Gate in the north, about the middle of tl northern extremity of the present Haram area, formed tl starting-point (1 f.).
2. Thence westward passing the towers of Hammeah ar Hananel to the Fish Gate (3–5).
3. The western wall (6–12).
4. The southern wall and gates, including the Valley and Du Gates (13 f.).
5. The south-east wall and gates (15–27).
6. The north-east wall—completion (28–32).

1–5. *The North and North-west Wall.*

**1. Eliashib** (= 'God will restore'; in *Luc.* the form is *'E* *Yashub* = 'God will turn or return'). Several persons with th name are mentioned in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles: s 1 Chron. iii. 24 (a descendant of Zerubbabel); Ezra x. 14, 29, 3 &c. The 'Eliashib the high priest' of verses 1 and 20 was s of Joiakim and grandson of Jeshua (see on Ezra ii. 2), the co temporary of Zerubbabel. He is called 'the priest' (= hig priest, see 2 Kings xi. 9 f., xvi. 10 f.) in Neh. xiii. 4. For t high-priesthood see on Ezra vii. 5. According to xii. 10 Eliash was the great-grandfather of Jaddua, the contemporary Alexander the Great, see on Ezra x. 6.

Later on there arose a schism between Nehemiah and l reforming party on the one hand, and Eliashib and the laxer ( broader?) party on the other, the principal occasions for whi were the following incidents: Being related by marriage Tobiah (see on ii. 10), Eliashib made it possible for the latter enter the priesthood though not of priestly descent, and actual allotted him one of the chambers in the Temple area (see xiii. 4 f All this happened in Nehemiah's absence, as he himself is care to tell us (xiii. 6). On his return this anomaly was rectifie Tobiah being expelled from his office and chamber. Soon aft this courageous act the Jewish reformer felt it his duty to dismi from the priesthood a grandson of Eliashib because he had alli himself by marriage with Sanballat the Horonite (xiii. 28). Of t he priests, and they builded the sheep gate; they anctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the ower of [a] Hammeah they sanctified it, unto the tower of

[a] Or, *The hundred*

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atter Josephus gives a different account, for it is certain that in *Intiq*. xi. 7, 2 and 8, 2 f. he has this incident in mind. According ɔ him, a certain Manassi, son of Jaddua (and therefore great-reat-grandson of Eliashib), married Nikaso, daughter of Sanballat he Kuthaean. He was expelled from the priesthood for refusing to ut her away, whereupon he took refuge among the Samaritans, vho welcomed him as the son of their governor and were glad to ppoint him priest of their rival Gerizim temple. Josephus, it vill be seen, dates the incident about the time of Alexander the ireat, if not later, but there is abundant evidence that the amaritan party had been organized many decades before this, nd there is proof in the Sachau papyri (i. 29) that Sanballat was contemporary of Nehemiah (*circa* 440 B.C.).

**rose up . . . and . . . builded** = 'set about building': see n x. 4.

**the sheep gate**: lit. 'gate of the small cattle (sheep and oats)': so also ver. 32 and xii. 39. It lay near the north-east orner of the Temple area, a little to the west of the modern it. Stephen's Gate, and hence its restoration fell appropriately to he lot of the priests. It is likely that just outside this gate there was market at which sheep and other animals were sold, chiefly for urposes of sacrifice, the Temple being near, but also, it would eem, for other purposes. This gate is no doubt the one referred ɔ in John v. 2.

**they sanctified it, and,** &c.: render, 'they laid its beams nd set up its doors even to the tower of Hammeah (the hundred) nd to the tower of Hananel.'

**they sanctified it** (and): this is never said of any other ate or of any part of the wall. Read (making a slight change in he Hebrew), 'they laid its beams' (see ver. 3). If the M. T. is etained the consecration of the gate might have been due to its earness to the Temple, to its market for sacrificial animals, and lso to the fact that it was repaired by priests. The second ccurrence of **they sanctified it** is to be deleted as a copyist's nistake (dittography).

**the tower of Hammeah**: both this tower and that of Iananel were probably situated upon the rock on which Antonia see ii. 8) stood; they were therefore somewhat to the west of he Sheep Gate.

Why is the 'Tower of the Hundred' (*Hammeah*) so called? Ve can but guess, as we are not told. Some say because it was

2 Hananel. And next unto him builded the men of Jerich
And next to [a] them builded Zaccur the son of Imr
3 And the fish gate did the sons of Hassenaah build; the
laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, th
4 bolts thereof, and the bars thereof. And next unto the
repaired Meremoth the son of Uriah, the son of Hakko

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[a] Heb. *him*.

100 cubits high, others because it was reached by 100 steps, third opinion being that it was defended by 100 men. Perha Hammeah was a man's name: see below. It is mentioned besid here only in xii. 39.

**tower of Hananel** (= 'whom God pities or favours': a man name): from xii. 39 and Jer. xxxi. 8 we infer that it stood the north of the city, and from verses 1–3 and Zech. xiv. 10 that was between the Sheep and Fish Gates.

It is probable that these two towers formed parts of one fortres perhaps that subsequently called Antonia: see on ii. 8.

**2.** (next unto) **him,** i.e. Eliashib, his co-workers bein ignored. Perhaps, however, we should read 'them,' as also ver. 8. The singular and plural are frequently confounded in suc phrases throughout this chapter. The Hebrew means literally ' his hand,' i.e. joining hands with (in a free, not literal, sense).

**the men of Jericho:** the Jericho contingent repaired th part of the wall that was nearest to their home (the priests pr ceding them because their part touched the Temple). For th site of Jericho see on Ezra ii. 34.

(next to) **them:** Heb. 'him.' The E.VV. rightly corre the M. T.: see earlier note on this verse.

**Zaccur:** nowhere else mentioned.

**3. the fish gate** (see xii. 39): situated probably at or ne where the modern Damascus Gate stands. It was separated fro the two towers mentioned in ver. 1 (Antonia?) by the strip wall mended by the Jerichoites and Zaccur. It was in all like hood so called because outside of it there was a fish market: s on ver. 1, 'Sheep Gate.' According to Zephaniah it seems to ha been in the new part of the city: see 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14.

**sons of Hassenaah:** see vii. 38 (Senaah) and Ezra ii. 35.

**doors thereof:** i.e. the two-leaved door (hence the plural filling in the space of the gateway: see on vi. 1.

**bolts:** the sockets right and left of the doors, into which t ends of the horizontal bars were slid when the door was locke They were used for house doors (Cant. v. 3) as well as for city gate

**4. repaired:** lit. 'strengthened,' made to be a strong wa capable of holding out against besiegers.

And next unto them repaired Meshullam the son of
Berechiah, the son of Meshezabel. And next unto
hem repaired Zadok the son of Baana. And next unto 5
hem the Tekoites repaired; but their nobles put not
heir necks to the work of their [a]lord. And [b]the old gate 6

[a] Or, *lords* Or, *Lord*

[b] Or, *the gate of the old* city or, *of the old* wall

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**Meremoth:** as he repaired a double portion (ver. 21) it is natural to think that he was wealthy and the family of which he was head numerous. From Ezra viii. 33 we learn that he was on of the high-priest Uriah.

**Meshullam:** through the marriage of his daughter to Tobiah's son (vi. 18) he was related to that leader of the Samaritan party. In the present undertaking, however, if not n all things, he is a co-worker with Nehemiah. Zerubbabel had a son of the same name (1 Chron. iii. 19).

**Baana:** see vii. 7, x. 27, and Ezra ii. 2.

**5. Tekoites:** Tekoah was the home of the prophet Amos (Amos i. 1, vii. 14), though he exercised his prophetic ministry n the Northern Kingdom. It lay some ten miles to the south of Jerusalem, and we might therefore have expected to find the men of Tekoa rebuilding the southern wall which was nearest to them: see ver. 2 ('men of Jericho'). Its omission from the ists in Ezra ii, Neh. vii may be caused by the fact that Jews had not at the time implied settled in it, or not in large numbers.

**nobles** (Heb. *addīrīm*, lit. 'strong ones'): so x. 29; 2 Chron. xxiii. 20. It is another Hebrew word (*Khōrim*) that is so translated in ii. 16 (see on), iv. 14, v. 17, vi. 16, vii. 5, and xiii. 17.

**put not their necks,** &c.: for the figure see Jer. xxvii. 12 and Matt. xi. 29.

**their lord:** i. e. Nehemiah, governor of the district, and therefore of Tekoa. Nehemiah's opponents were for the most part members of the upper classes, since those guilty of marrying 'strange women' belonged chiefly to those classes. Jewish and other expositors understood the word 'lord' to mean God.

6–12. *The Western Wall.*

**6. the old gate:** the Hebrew ('Gate of the Old,' see R. Vm., 'gate' being masculine and 'old' feminine) does not allow of this rendering. It is far better with G. A. Smith to make a trifling change in the Hebrew, rendering 'the gate of the second (city).' The Fish Gate (see on ver. 3) was also, it would seem, in the new or second city. It is now generally held that this gate is identical with the 'Corner Gate' (2 Kings xiv. 13; 2 Chron. xxvi. 9; Jer. xxxi. 38) and the 'First Gate' (Zech. xiv. 10), where both names occur,

repaired Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the s
of Besodeiah; they laid the beams thereof, and set u
the doors thereof, and the bolts thereof, and the ba
7 thereof. And next unto them repaired Melatiah th
Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeo
and of Mizpah, *which appertained* to the throne of th
8 governor beyond the river. Next unto him repaire
Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, goldsmiths. And next un

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This gate would therefore stand north-west of the city, a litt
to the east of the Ephraim Gate. We ought to have menti
made next of the Ephraim Gate if it were on the line of Neh
miah's wall. But it might not have needed repair, or G. A. Smi
may be right in saying that this gate was built on a lower wa
Cf. 'above the gate of Ephraim,' xii. 39, see on.

**Joiada:** not the priest of that name, xii. 10, 22, xiii. 28.

**Meshullam:** apparently a common name, see on ver. 4.

**7.** Read and render, 'And next to them repaired Melati
the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite (together with) t
men of Gibeon and Meronoth who belong to the dominion (rul
of the governor of Transpotamia.'

**Mizpah:** better (with Bertheau, Meyer, Bertholet, Löhr, &
read 'Meronoth,' which makes a good parallel with (men o
Gibeon: Mizpah is represented by its rulers (verses 15, 19).
we retain the name we must understand by it another Mizpah
one further to the north.

***which appertained*** (to): since these words are implied in t
Hebrew the italics should be removed.

**throne:** here = 'rule' or 'dominion' as in Ps. lxxxix. 29, 3
The representatives of Gibeon and Meronoth (? Mizpah) we
under no obligation to help in the work as they were under t
jurisdiction of the Persian satrap of Transpotamia. Th
generous offer of service was therefore all the more deservi
of mention.

Another interpretation given to these words is that those nam
repaired as far as that part of the wall in or near which t
Persian satrap had a residence. But we do not elsewhere fi
the remotest reference to such a residence, though Schick was
opinion that in his digging he came upon the remains of one[1].

**8.** (next unto) **him:** see on v. 2.

**goldsmiths:** read, 'one of the goldsmiths,' prefixing *b*
(= son, then 'one of'). Cf. the next clause 'one (lit. 'son
of the apothecaries.'

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[1] See *ZDPV.* 1885, 269 f.

him repaired Hananiah one of the [a] apothecaries, and they
[b] fortified Jerusalem even unto the broad wall. And next 9
unto them repaired Rephaiah the son of Hur, the ruler
of half the district of Jerusalem. And next unto them 10
repaired Jedaiah the son of Harumaph, even over against
his house. And next unto him repaired Hattush the son
of Hashabneiah. Malchijah the son of Harim, and 11
Hasshub the son of Pahath-moab, repaired another por-

[a] Or, *perfumers* [b] Or, *left*

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**apothecaries:** lit. 'mixers'; what are meant are sellers of perfumes, spices, and the like, much in demand for cosmetic purposes in Eastern countries. We must not take the word to mean 'chemists' in the modern sense.

**fortified:** Heb. 'left,' which can have no meaning. The E.VV. imply a slight change in the text (*yᵉʿazᵉzu* for *yaʿazᵉbu*), which must be accepted. Many futile attempts have been made to retain the M. T. and give it a passable meaning.

**the broad wall:** this lay, according to xii. 38 f., between the Tower of the Furnaces (see on ver. 11) and the Ephraim Gate. Why was the wall broader in this part? No one knows. Perhaps owing to the lie of the land (Stade) or because here the first and second walls overlapped (G. A. Smith?), or it might have been made so for strategic purposes (Ryle).

**9. district:** Heb. 'something round,' cf. Arabic, then a circuit, district. Jerusalem seems for administrative purposes to have been divided into halves. See verses 12, 16, 17, 18, where other half districts are referred to, and note on ver. 22.

**10.** (next unto) **them:** read 'him' and see on ver. 2. If we keep **them** we must understand it to refer to **Rephaiah** and his party.

**even:** omit with some MSS., Syr., *Luc.*, and many editors.

**11. Harim:** see Ezra ii. 32, 39.

(Pahath-moab (see on Ezra ii. 6))... **another portion**, lit., 'a second measured portion,' the same words in verses 19, 20, 21, 24, 27, 30: see Ezek. xlv. 3, where the same noun is translated 'measure.' It is evident that in some cases the same persons repaired two portions of the wall; cf. verses 21 and 4, 27 and 5. In other cases, as here, persons are said to repair a second portion though nothing has been said of a first portion: so, besides the present verse, verses 19, 20, 30. In ver. 18 we must read 'Binnui' as in ver. 24 for 'Bavvai.' In all the other cases verses or portions of verses describing the repair by the same workers of a first part have dropped out.

12 tion, and the tower of the furnaces. And next unto him
repaired Shallum the son of Hallohesh, the ruler of hal
13 the district of Jerusalem, he and his daughters. The
valley gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants o
Zanoah; they built it, and set up the doors thereof, the
bolts thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits
14 of the wall unto the dung gate. And the dung gate re-
paired Malchijah the son of Rechab, the ruler of the
district of Beth-haccherem; he built it, and set up the doors

**and the tower,** &c.: read (with LXX), 'even as far as the Tower,' &c.

**tower of the furnaces** (or 'ovens'): Schick identifies it with the David Tower (*el-Qal'a*) near the Jaffa Gate. It was certainl somewhere on the wall line between the Jaffa and Valley Gates, probably near the south-west corner of the modern city[1]. I may have had its name from the fact that it joined on to the Baker's street (or Bazaar?) of Jer. xxxvii. 2. Some think it was the tower built by Uzziah on the Corner Gate (2 Chron. xxvi. 9) but it was more to the west than that.

**12. half the district:** see on ver. 9.

**he and his daughters:** render 'it (the half district) and it dependent places' (villages, towns, and cities): see xi. 25, 27 where Heb. 'daughters' is rendered in the E.VV. 'towns' i accordance with Heb. idiom. This form of expression meets u very frequently in the Priestly Document.

13 f. *Southern Wall and Gates.*

**13. valley gate:** see on ii. 13.

**Zanoah:** about a dozen miles due west of Jerusalem, now called *Zanua*. See xi. 30 and Joshua xi. 34.

**bolts:** see on ver. 3.

**a thousand cubits:** how could the same batch of worker repair the gate and more than the third of a mile of wall? Perhap the number engaged was large, or the needful repairs in the wal were few and slight (see on ver. 6); or it may be that the tex is defective, other names having fallen out.

**14. dung gate:** see on ii. 13.

**Beth-haccherem:** better *Beth-hakkerem* = 'place of the vine yard': see Jer. vi. 1. Usually identified with the Frank Moun (*Jebel Furudis*), a little to the south-east of Bethlehem.

**he built it:** Heb. 'he would build it,' which is intolerable

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[1] Paton (*op. cit.*, p. 99) identifies the site with that of Maudslay's scarp

thereof, the bolts thereof, and the bars thereof. And the 15
fountain gate repaired Shallun the son of Colhozeh, the
ruler of the district of Mizpah; he built it, and covered
it, and set up the doors thereof, the bolts thereof, and the
bars thereof, and the wall of the pool of [a] Shelah by
the king's garden, even unto the stairs that go down
from the city of David. After him repaired Nehemiah 16

[a] In Isa. viii. 6, *Shiloah*.

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read (with *Luc.*, LXX) 'he' (i.e. Malchijah) 'and his sons' (repaired), and add (as *Luc.*, LXX, cf. ver. 15) 'and they covered it.'

15–27. *The South-east Wall and Gates.*

**15. fountain gate:** see on ii. 14.

**the district** (see on ver. 9) **of Mizpah:** distinct from the city of that name (see ver. 19). But Meyer and Bertholet simplify and perhaps (as they claim) restore the text in verses 15 and 19, reading, ver. 15 'Shallum . . . the ruler of half the district of Mizpah. 19 Ezer . . . the ruler of half the district of Mizpah.' The two parts of the district of Mizpah are then represented. There are no external authorities for these changes, as the corruption, if real, is too old.

**pool of Shelah:** this is no doubt the modern *Birket-es-Silwan* into which the fresh waters of the Virgin's Spring (the Gihon of 1 Kings i. 33, &c.), after passing through the celebrated tunnel, empty themselves. The name *Shelakh* ('sent,' or 'what is sent'?) is identical with the *Shiloakh* of Isa. viii. 6 and the Siloam of John ix. 7. It must have laid within the walls so as to be beyond the reach of invaders[1]. Ryle identifies this pool with the modern *Birket-el-Hamra*, a little to the south of the above site.

**the king's garden:** see 2 Kings xxv. 4; Jer. xxxix. 4, lii. 7. It lay probably within the walls (because too precious to be outside) near the mouth of the Tyropoeon.

**stairs,** &c.: steps on the rock leading down from the Ophel (Sion) fortress to the pool.

**the city of David:** primarily the 'stronghold of Zion' taken by David from the Jebusites (2 Sam. v. 6 ff.) which became the citadel of Jerusalem. It was situate on the southern slope of Ophel, and therefore a little to the south of the area covered by the complex of Temple buildings, see *DB.* 'Temple,' fig. 1. Then the phrase came to denote, as here, that part of Jerusalem which was built close to the Temple and royal palace, though never in the O. T. is it used for the whole city[2].

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[1] See 2 Chron. xxxii. 3 f.; G. A. Smith, *Jerus.* i. 86.

[2] G. A. Smith, *Jerus.* i. 154, and Psalms, vol. ii (*Century Bible*), 368 ff.

the son of Azbuk, the ruler of half the district of
Beth-zur, unto the place over against the sepulchres of
David, and unto the pool that was made, and unto the
17 house of the mighty men. After him repaired the Lev-
ites, Rehum the son of Bani. Next unto him repaired
Hashabiah, the ruler of half the district of Keilah, for his
18 district. After him repaired their brethren, Bavvai the
son of Henadad, the ruler of half the district of Keilah.
19 And next to him repaired Ezer the son of Jeshua, the
ruler of Mizpah, another portion, over against the going
20 up to the armoury at the turning *of the wall.* After him

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**16. half the district of Beth-zur:** see ver. 17 and on ver. 15 for other districts thus divided.

**Beth-zur** = the modern *Bethṣur*, about a dozen miles to the south of Jerusalem. See Joshua xv. 58; 2 Chron. xi. 7.

**sepulchres of David:** see 2 Chron. xxxii. 33 (burial-place of Hezekiah). Perhaps this royal cemetery was situate south of the modern St. Stephen's Gate where there is now a Moslem necropolis. This would hardly disagree with 1 Kings ii. 10.

**pool . . . made:** i. e. an artificial not a natural pool, the language suggesting that it was a newly made one. Most recent authorities think the reference is to the pool of Hezekiah (see Isa. xxii. 9-11).

**the house of the mighty men** (= warriors): probably what is meant is the site (with ruins?) of the royal barracks built originally by David (see 2 Sam. xvi. 16, xxxiii. 8).

**17. the Levites:** only one is mentioned; possibly some names have dropped out, or the one mentioned may represent a clan.

**Bani:** see ix. 4.

**Hashabiah:** see Ezra viii. 19, 24 (a different person).

**half the district,** &c.: see on verses 15, 16.

**Keilah** = the modern *Kila*, some sixteen miles south-south-east of Jerusalem; so Tobler and most: see Joshua xv. 44; 1 Sam. xxiii. 1 f.; 1 Chron. iv. 19. Mühlau denies the identification on the ground that the modern town is on the lowlands while Keilah must have been among the mountains of Judah.

**18. their brethren:** i. e. the kinsmen of the Hashabiah clan who took under their care the other half of the district of Keilah.

**Bavvai:** read (with LXX) Binnui, as in ver. 24; cf. x. 10; see on ver. 11.

**19. Ezer . . . Mizpah:** see on ver. 15.

**another portion:** the clause telling of Ezer's first portion

Baruch the son of [a] Zabbai earnestly repaired another portion, from the turning *of the wall* unto the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. After him repaired 21
Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz another portion, from the door of the house of Eliashib even to the end of the house of Eliashib. And after him repaired 22
the priests, the men of the [b] Plain. After [c] them repaired 23
Benjamin and Hasshub over against their house. After [c] them repaired Azariah the son of Maaseiah the son of

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[a] Another reading is, *Zaccai.* [b] Or, *Circuit* [c] Heb. *him.*

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has fallen out; where so many names are concerned the wonder is that the text has been as well preserved as it is: see on ver. 11.

**armoury:** Heb. 'arms,' 'weapons,' then, it is generally assumed (though without analogy or proof), 'the place where they are kept,' 'arsenal.' We might render quite literally 'over against where one goes up to the arms' (i. e. where they are kept).

**the turning:** see 2 Chron. xxvi. 9. What is meant is a part of the wall that bends inwards; so verses 20, 24 f. It is the antithesis of 'the corner' (= a bend outwards) in ver. 24.

**20. Zabbai:** so LXX and *ket*, cf. Ezra x. 28; Ar., Syr., Vulg., and *qr* read 'Zaccai,' cf. Ezra ii. 9. In the Hebrew the difference is hardly perceptible.

**earnestly:** omit (with LXX and Ar.). The Hebrew word is simply a dittograph of the following verb ('repaired'), which in Hebrew resembles it closely. *Luc.*, Vulg. read, 'towards the mountain,' making a slight change in the text. The Syr. reads another verb ('he took').

**another portion:** the first has in this case also been omitted: see on ver. 11.

**turning:** see on ver. 19.

**21. Meremoth . . . another portion:** see ver. 4, where the first portion is mentioned (cf. Ezra viii. 53).

**from the door . . . to the end** of the house of Eliashib (see on ver. 1), whence it may be concluded that the high-priest's house was along the line of wall, and that it was of considerable extent. The text and meaning are clear enough, notwithstanding the difficulties which Ryssel and Siegfried see or, rather, create.

**22. Plain:** Heb. (*kikkar* for *kirkar*) = 'what is round.' Then 'a portion of land,' 'a district.' It is the technical term for the low-lying district about the Jordan, now called 'The Ghor' (see Gen. xix. 17, &c.; cf. Mal. iii. 5).

**23.** (After) **them:** Heb. 'him,' see on ver. 2. Perhaps the name and work of one man were described in a lost clause.

24 Ananiah beside his own house. After him repaired
Binnui the son of Henadad another portion, from the
house of Azariah unto the turning *of the wall*, and unto
25 the corner. Palal the son of Uzai *repaired* over against
the turning *of the wall*, and [a] the tower that standeth out
from the upper house of the king, which is by the court
of the guard. After him [b] Pedaiah the son of Parosh
26 *repaired*. (Now the Nethinim dwelt in Ophel, unto the
place over against the water gate toward the east, and the

[a] Or, *the upper tower . . . from the house of the king*

[b] Or, *Pedaiah the son of Parosh* (*now . . . Ophel*) repaired *unto &c.*

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**24. Binnui . . . another portion:** see on ver. 18.

**turning . . . corner:** see on ver. 19.

**25.** Translate: '(After him repaired) Palal . . . over against the bend (inwards) (*of the wall*) and (over against) the upper tower that stands out from the royal palace (lit. king's house) which (tower) is towards (= in the direction of) the Guard Court.'

The first three words of the above (which are in brackets) must be restored: they are necessary for the sense, and are in harmony with the usual formulae in this chapter.

**turning:** see on ver. 19.

**upper:** this word belongs to **tower** (as in LXX, Vulg.) not to **house** (as Syr., *Luc.*, and E.VV.), though the Hebrew permits either. There had been many towers, but (as far as we know) only one royal residence.

**that standeth out,** &c.: this upper tower, instead of coinciding with the wall as was usual, was built against the wall on the outside.

**court of the guard,** or 'guard court': a part of the palace area in which were kept prisoners whose offences were not serious enough to justify their being thrust into the dungeon (see on ver. 31 and xii. 39). They could have mutual intercourse and receive visits from their friends (see Jer. xxxii. 2, and Driver's note). The part of the wall to which the 'upper tower' was attached formed probably one side of this court, and was accordingly 'towards' the latter. For other projecting towers see ver. 26 f.

**After him Pedaiah:** in the Hebrew no verb occurs, showing the corruptness of the text. Probably ver. 26[a] (to **Ophel**) belongs to the close of ver. 27. We should then render, 'After him Pedaiah . . . repaired [26[b]] unto the place,' &c.

**26. Ophel:** see on ver. 27.

**water gate:** see on Ezra x. 9. We know that it was on the

tower that standeth out.) After him the Tekoites repaired 27
another portion, over against the great tower that standeth
out, and unto the wall of Ophel. Above the horse gate 28
repaired the priests, every one over against his own house.

east of Jerusalem, and that in front of it was an open space capable of receiving a large number of people (see viii. 1, 3, 16). Siegfried and G. A. Smith [1] accept the Talmudic tradition that it was a city gate on the line of the eastern wall, though in Nehemiah's accounts of the inspecting of the wall (iii. 13-15, very brief), the restoring of them (in this chapter), and of their dedication (xii. 27 ff.), nothing is said of the gate except here. It had its name probably because it opened upon the path which conducted to Gihon (= the Virgin's Spring)—such is the old tradition.

Bertholet (*in loc.*) argues from viii. 1, 3, 16 that there must have been a space between the water gate and the city walls—inside the latter. '(The water gate) towards the east' he explains as = 'to the east of the wall that was now being repaired.' Perhaps there was a water gate in some other part of the wall. In any case the present gate was on the east, though it hardly seemed necessary to say that, as it is of the eastern wall that Nehemiah is now writing. See on Ezra x. 9.

**the tower,** &c. : the same tower as that similarly described in ver. 25. This tower marked the *terminus ad quem* for Palal, and the *terminus a quo* for Pedaiah.

**27. Tekoites . . . another portion :** see on ver. 5.

**Ophel** (lit. 'a swelling') : the hill continuing the Temple Hill on the south-west. When mentioned in pre-exilic literature (2 Kings v. 24; Isa. xxx. 14; Micah iv. 8), the word is probably an interpolation. On the other hand, later writers (Nehemiah, Chronicles) having a fondness for 'Ophel,' avoid 'Sion,' suggesting, what abundant other evidence makes clear, that Sion and Ophel were both names for the same plot of ground. Cf. the probable meaning of 'Sion,' 'the summit of a mountain,' and of 'Ophel,' 'swelling [2].' The name Sion came to denote the fortress captured by David from the Jebusites, and then the whole area on which the complex of royal and Temple buildings were placed : see G. A. Smith, *Jerus.* i. 144 ff., 152 ff., and cf. 'Psalms' vol. ii, p. 368 ff. (*Century Bible*).

28-32. *The North-east Wall. Completion.*

**28. horse gate :** see 2 Kings xi. 16; 2 Chron. xxiii. 15; Jer. xxxi. 40. From the last passage it may be fairly inferred that this gate stood at the eastern extremity of Jerusalem. It was

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[1] *Jerus.* i. 86.

[2] Prof. Sayce thinks that Ophel was the ridge of Zion that was cut away by the Maccabees.

29 After [a]them repaired Zadok the son of Immer over agains
his own house. And after him repaired Shemaiah th
30 son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the east gate. After him
repaired Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun th
sixth son of Zalaph, another portion. After him repaired
Meshullam the son of Berechiah over against his chamber
31 After him repaired Malchijah one of the goldsmiths unto
the house of the Nethinim, and of the merchants, ove

[a] Heb. *him.*

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situated a little to the south of the modern Golden Gate and over looked the Wady Kidron. It was probably so called because th king's horses used to be led through it to the stables (see Joseph *Antiq.* ix. 7, 3). Furrer is hardly right in saying that this gat received its name from the horses used in sun worship (se 2 Kings xxiii. 11), as a name with such an origin would hav been long since abandoned.

**the priests:** it was natural for these to see to the repairin of the parts of the wall that were contiguous to their own dwellin in the sacred enclosure.

**29. Zadok:** see Ezra ii. 37.

**Shemaiah:** see 1 Chron. xxvi. 6.

**east gate:** not the 'water gate,' or this name would hav been given it here as in ver. 26. Probably it is a Temple gate Shemaiah seems to have been a Levite (see Ezek. xliv. 11).

**30. Hanun . . . another portion:** see ver. 13.

**the sixth son,** &c.: this description is absent from ver. 13 and, besides, it is unparalleled in this list. Guthe and Ber tholet are, therefore, probably right in seeing in the Hebrew words a corruption of the name of the place whence Hanun came

**Meshullam:** probably the words 'a second portion' hav by haplography fallen out (see ver. 4, where he is mentioned a having repaired a portion of the north wall).

**chamber:** the Heb. word *nishkah* occurs also in xii. 44 xiii. 7. It is an allied form of the word (*lishkah*) so translated i Ezra viii. 29 and x. 6 (see on both).

**31. goldsmiths:** Heb. 'goldsmith' (singular). But the Englis translators rightly appended the Heb. *m*, making it plural.

**Nethinim:** temple servants (see p. 63 f.).

**merchants:** i. e. such as trafficked in articles connected wit the Temple worship, animals for sacrifice, incense, garments, &c (see Matt. xxi. 12; John ii. 14). They and the Nethinim seem t have occupied a room in the Temple area between them, not fo sleeping in, but for performing their duties in the daytime.

against the gate of Hammiphkad, and to the [a] ascent of the
corner. And between the [a] ascent of the corner and the 32
sheep gate repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants.

But it came to pass that, when Sanballat heard that we 4
builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indigna-
tion, and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his 2
brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do

[a] Or, *upper chamber*

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(the gate of) **Hammiphkad:** lit. 'place of visitation' or of 'punishment'; render 'prison' (see Ezek. xliii. 21, where 'the appointed place of the house' (E.VV.) is (*ham*) '*miphkad* of the house'). Probably the word in the present verse stands for a building some distance from (=over against) the wall where ordinary prisoners were shut up. It cannot (with Schultz) be identified with the guard court of ver. 25 (see on) since it is too far to the north (see xii. 39).

**ascent of the corner:** Heb. 'the upper (part or chamber) of the corner.' Perhaps a tower in a wall corner or angle bulging out and used for recreation or as a place of observation.

**32. sheep gate:** see on ver. 1. The whole circuit of the walls has been now described.

**goldsmiths:** here, according to Perles, 'money-changers' (see verses 8, 31).

**merchants:** see on ver. 31. These two classes must have had some special connexion with the Temple and its requirements, and hence quite appropriately they repair parts of the wall near the sacred enclosure.

IV. (Heb. iii. 33-38). OPPOSITION OF THE SAMARITAN PARTY AND THE MEANS USED BY NEHEMIAH TO NEUTRALIZE IT.

1–3. *Taunts of Sanballat and Tobiah* (see on ii. 10).

**1. that we builded:** better, 'that we were building,' or with Siegfried (as the Heb. permits), 'that we were about to build.' But see ver. 6.

**mocked:** see ver. 2 f.

**2. his brethren:** in a loose sense 'his associates' (see ver. 3 and ii. 10).

**the army of Samaria:** hardly a contingent of the Persian army (Rawlinson), but a body of 'irregulars' belonging to Samaria and the parts around, sworn to defend the Persian authority in all emergencies (see on ver. 7).

**What do,** &c.: better, 'What are these feeble Jews about to do?'

these feeble Jews? [a]will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, seeing they
3 are burned? Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a [b]fox go up,
4 he shall break down their stone wall. Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn back their reproach upon their own head, and give them up to spoiling in a land of

[a] Or, *will they leave to themselves* aught? Or, *will men let them alone?* [b] Or, *jackal*

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**will they fortify themselves?** The Hebrew (see R.Vm.) yields no sense. Change the Heb. *lahem* ('for,' 'to themselves') to *l'elohim*, and we get excellent Hebrew and sense, 'Will they leave (resign) (the matter) to God?' For the thought see 2 Kings xviii. 30, 32, 35. A similar mistake in the Heb. text (one easily made) occurs in 1 Sam. iii. 13, and Hos. xiii. 2.

**an end:** i. e. of the rebuilding.

**3.** A parenthesis, as v. 19, vi. 9, 14.

**that which they build, if a fox,** &c.: the walls which these Jews may build will be so fragile that one of the foxes with which the ruined walls are infested (Ps. lxiii. 10; Lam. v. 18) will be able to level these new walls to the ground.

**fox:** the Heb. word is properly so rendered, as is shown by Arabic, Assyrian, and Persian cognates. Some render jackal, but the Arabic and Aramaic word for the latter animal can be proved to be philologically different from the Hebrew word (*shu'al*) in this verse. Of course some things predicated of the fox apply to the jackal, but the word for fox retains its own sense here and elsewhere for all that.

4 f. *One of Nehemiah's ejaculatory prayers*: see for others v. 19, vi. 6, 14, xiii. 14, 22, 29.

The vindictive spirit is characteristic of the age. Though arising from zeal for Yahweh and His cause, as understood, it is itself reprehensible. Cf. the Vindictive Psalms, and see Introd. to Ps. cix (*Century Bible*).

**4. we are despised:** add one letter and read (with *Luc.*, LXX) 'we are an object of contempt.'

**give . . . spoiling:** render, 'make them a spoil'; see Ezra ix. 7. The Heb. word *bizzah* is intended probably as a kind of pun on the word for 'object of contempt' (see above). 'They have made us a *buzah*, make thou them a *bizzah*.'

**in a land of captivity:** may they, in a foreign hostile land, have the same bitter experience which our nation passed through in Babylon.

captivity: and cover not their iniquity, and let not their 5
sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked *thee* to anger before the builders. So we built the 6
wall; and all the wall was joined together unto half *the height* thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

[a] But it came to pass that, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, 7
and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that [b] the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem went forward, *and* that the breaches began to be stopped,
then they were very wroth; and they conspired all of 8

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[a] [Ch. iv. 1 in Heb.] [b] Heb. *healing went up upon the walls.*

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**5. cover not,** &c.: see Ps. lxxxv. 2.

**let not their sin be blotted out:** see Ps. cix. 14.

**they have provoked . . . to anger:** the object (Yahweh) understood, as in Ps. cvi. 29; Hos. xii. 15.

**before the builders:** perhaps Sanballat and his friends had tried to dissuade the builders from their task.

**6.** *Progress of the work.*

**we built:** better, 'we continued to build' (i.e. rebuild): see Ezra v. 2.

**unto half:** *the height* being understood is rightly supplied by the E.VV. But so interpreted we must not regard ch. ii as implying the completion of the walls, or must we (with Siegfried) regard the present clause as a gloss?

7 f. *Conspiracy to stop the work.*

**7. Sanballat:** see on ii. 10.

**Arabians** (Arabs) **. . . Ammonites:** i.e. such of these people as belonged to the entourage of Geshem (see on ii. 9), Tobiah (see on ii. 10).

**and the Ashdodites:** Guthe (with LXX) omits this clause as the Ashdodites are nowhere else mentioned in this connexion. Yet all the other versions have the words, including *Luc.* and some MSS. of the LXX.

**the repairing,** &c.: the Hebrew word is used of the healing of a wound by the growing of new instead of the old diseased flesh. It is always in the O.T. used figuratively: see Isa. lviii. 8; Jer. viii. 22 (of the restoration of Israel), and 2 Chron. xxiv. 13 (of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, as here).

**went forward:** lit. 'went up,' following out the figure—the new healthy flesh grew up instead of the old. So in the above passages except in that from Isaiah, where the verb = 'to sprout up' (*samakh*).

**breaches:** see vi. 1. **very wroth:** see ver. 1.

them together to come and fight against Jerusalem, and
9 to cause confusion therein. But we made our prayer
unto our God, and set a watch against them day and
10 night, because of them. And Judah said, The strength
of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much
11 rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall. And
our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see,
till we come into the midst of them, and slay them, and
12 cause the work to cease. And it came to pass that, when
the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us
ten times [a] from all places, Ye must return unto us.

[a] Or, *From all places whence ye shall return* they will be *upon us*

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**8. conspired:** lit. 'banded (themselves) together,' the verb which (in the passive) occurs in ver. 6 ('was joined'). It is commonly used of secret, treacherous consultations.

**to cause confusion** = to bring about a panic. The noun occurs besides in Isa. xxxii. 6 only.

9-23. *Nehemiah's prayer and precautions.*

**9. set a watch** = posted sentinels: see vii. 3.

**because of them:** Heb. 'in front of them.' The sentinels were set towards the direction whence the enemy was expected to advance.

**10. Judah:** the country for the people, as often in the O. T.; cf. Moab, Edom, Israel; and cf. 'we' further on in the verse.

**rubbish:** see ver. 2: until this was cleared away the walls could not be completed.

**11. adversaries:** the Hebrew word (*sar*) denotes 'strictly those who injure,' and has reference to what they do. The word translated 'enemies' in ver. 15 (Heb. *'Oyeb*) is subjective in its connotation and suggests the unkind feelings harboured, as the other word the harm done.

**said:** the verb often = 'to say inwardly,' and so 'to purpose.' Perhaps Nehemiah got wind of an actual conversation of the kind.

**cause the work to cease:** the same verb in Dan. ix. 27 (of sacrifice) in the same sense, and in 2 Chron. xvi. 5 (end) in a somewhat different sense.

**12.** (the Jews which dwelt) **by them:** near their foes, the Samaritans and their allies.

**ten times:** i. e. 'many times,' as in Gen. xxxi. 41.

**from all places,** &c.: the Hebrew is scarcely intelligible. Better amend with Bertholet and read as follows: 'From all the

Therefore set I in the lowest parts of the space behind 13
the wall, in the open places, I even set the people after
their families with their swords, their spears, and their
bows. And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the 14
nobles, and to the [a] rulers, and to the rest of the people,
Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is
great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons
and your daughters, your wives and your houses. And it 15

[a] Or, *deputies*

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places where they (the enemy) dwell' (so Syr., the Hebrew consonantal text agreeing) 'they are coming up' (so *Luc.*, LXX, Vulg., Guthe) 'against us.' That is, the Jews who have come from their country homes to take part in the work of rebuilding say over and over, 'from all parts as we came along we saw our foes marching up against us.' It was in consequence of this intelligence that Nehemiah promptly set about the measures detailed in verses 13 ff.

**13.** The text is almost hopelessly corrupt. Of many attempts at restoration and explanation the following seems to the present writer the best—it is in part his own: 'And I set in the low places of the space behind the wall (which wall was) a great defence: yea, I set the people according to their clans,' &c.

**in the lowest parts:** Bertheau, Siegfried, &c., making a slight change in the Hebrew, read 'catapults,' the word in 2 Chron. xxvi. 15.

**open places:** the (one) Hebrew word occurs besides only in Ezek. xxiv. 7 f. and xxvi. 4, 14 with the noun 'rock' in the sense 'a bare,' lit. 'sunburnt place' on a rock. This does not make sense here. It is better to read the Hebrew word for 'shadows' (*ṣelalim* for *sekhikhim*, much more alike in the Hebrew consonant text) and to understand in the sense 'defences,' then (plural of intensity) 'strong defence.' The noun has this sense in Isa. xlviii. 45 (of a wall); Num. xiv. 9 (of Yahweh); Ps. xci. 1. The preposition before the noun is the *beth essentiae* which serves to introduce the predicate (see G. K. 119, i).

**spears:** used for thrusting at an enemy when near enough. The **bows** were for attacking those at a distance, the **swords** for hand-to-hand fights.

**14. I looked, and rose up:** an extraordinary combination of words in this connexion. Read with Siegfried (?), Bertholet, and Kent, 'And I saw their fear,' changing one Hebrew word. Cf. **Be not afraid.**

**nobles . . . rulers:** see on ii. 16.

**great and terrible:** see i. 5 and ix. 32.

came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.
16 And it came to pass from that time forth, that half of my servants wrought in the work, and half of them held the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the coats of mail;
17 and the rulers were behind [a]all the house of Judah. They

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[a] Or, *all the house of Judah that builded the wall. And they that &c.*

**15. enemies:** see on ver. 11.

(that) **it** (was known) = their purpose to march upon the city. This word should be italicized, as it is not in the M. T.

**God had brought,** &c.: Nehemiah had but used the means; the result was God's doing.

**counsel:** common in the O. T. in the sense of 'scheme,' 'plan' (see Ezra iv. 5, Isa. xxix. 15, xxx. 1, &c.). We have the same phrase as here 'to bring to nought,' lit. to break 'a plan,' in Ezra iv. 5; 2 Sam. xv. 34, &c.

**we returned,** &c.: no longer fearing an immediate attack they resumed their work, though (verses 15 ff.) with due regard to the real danger still existing.

**16. my servants:** the select body chosen by Nehemiah, or allotted him as an army of defence, not the whole of the governor's subjects (Judah): see verses 17, 23, v. 10, 16, xiii. 19.

Of the above, half gave themselves to work (but even those were armed, see ver. 17), the other half to defence.

**held the spears:** the E.VV. here, as often (see on Ezra x. 16), translate from a corrected text. The M. T. is unidiomatic.

**shields:** the Hebrew noun here (sing. *māgēn*) stands for the small shield carried by warriors along with spears, &c. Another word frequently translated 'shield' (*ṣinnah*) denotes one that is larger, requiring sometimes at least another to carry it (see 1 Sam. xvii. 7). The latter weighed about four times as much as the former: see Skinner on 1 Kings x. 16 f. (*Century Bible*). Both words come together in Jer. xlvi. 3; Ezek. xxiii. 24, &c. (buckler (*māgēn*) and shield). Two other words (*shelet*, see Jer. li. 11, and *kidon*, Job xxxix. 23, R.V. javelin) are wrongly translated 'shield.'

**coats of mail:** leather coats covered with thin plates of bronze (see 1 Sam. xvii. 4). These are portrayed plentifully on the Assyrian and Egyptian monuments of the ninth century B. C. and later. During the winter of 1908-9 Petrie found portions of some of them on the site of the palace of Apries (reigned *circa* 590-570 B. C.) at Memphis.

**rulers:** the Hebrew word as in ix. 9 (see on), not that in ver. 19 (see on ii. 16).

hat builded the wall and they that bare burdens laded
hemselves, every one with one of his hands wrought in
he work, and with the other held his weapon; and the 18
uilders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and
o builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.
And I said unto the nobles, and to the [a] rulers and to the 19
est of the people, The work is great and large, and we are
eparated upon the wall, one far from another: in what 20
lace soever ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye
hither unto us; our God shall fight for us. So we 21
wrought in the work: and half of them held the spears
rom the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.
Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let 22
every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in

[a] Or, *deputies*

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**were behind,** &c.: for the purpose of encouraging and directing in the event of an attack.

**all the house,** &c.: join on to the first five words in ver. 17, as in the R.Vm.: 'All the house of Judah that builded the wall (17) and they that,' &c.

**17. laded themselves:** read, with very little alteration in the Hebrew, 'were armed.' So Ryssel (in Kautzsch, *Heilige Schrift*), Guthe, &c.: cf. what follows.

**18. he that sounded the trumpet:** to give an alarm in case of an attack.

**19. nobles . . . rulers:** see on ii. 16.

**21.** The interval between sunrise and sunset varies in Palestine between fourteen hours (in summer) and ten (in winter).

**appeared:** lit. 'came out.' In Hebrew the idiom for sunrise is 'to come out' (from his night chamber?), that for sunset being 'to enter in' (i. e. to return to his night chamber?). These modes of expression have, it would appear, a mythological origin.

**22. Let every one with his servant lodge,** &c.: i. e. the master builders and those who helped. Perhaps by the latter we are to understand the burden-bearers (see ver. 17), i. e. those who carried the building materials. Many men of both classes had country homes, to which they seem to have returned of nights. Nehemiah would have them spend the nights at Jerusalem for the security of the latter and for their own safety, for the enemy was now on the alert (see on ver. 12). But it would have gone hard with them if the same men had to work in the daytime and watch

the night they may be a guard to us, and may labour in the
23 day. So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, [a] every one *went with* his weapon *to* the water.

[a] The text is probably faulty.

during the night. It must be therefore that the watching was done by relays, who took duty in turns.

**23. my servants :** see on ver. 16.

**men of the guard :** probably the foreign soldiers allowed Nehemiah by the king of Persia when he left for Jerusalem (see ii. 9).

**every one *went*,** &c. : the best MSS. of the LXX omit this clause, but its sister Greek text (*Luc.*) makes amends by giving a conflate or double text, which Guthe adopts[1]. The M. T. makes no sense, for it is simply 'every one his weapon (missile) the water,' though it is usually explained that every one went dressed having his missile to the place where nature was relieved. If the text is retained, slightly amend the last word and render 'every one with his weapon in his hand.' The M. T. does not permit of the rendering of Grotius : '(but) every one put them (the clothes) off during his ablutions'; cf. Mark vii. 4, 8.

## V. Social Distress and the Means Nehemiah took for its Removal.

1-5. *The poor complain of the extortion and oppression of the rich.* Since the work of rebuilding was a labour of love—for there is not a word about payment of wages—the amount of time and energy set apart for the ordinary occupations of life must have been greatly diminished. Moreover, the unsettlement in the country districts and the risks connected with labouring and even residence in them (see on iv. 12) must have brought about almost a paralysis of agricultural industry, greatly to the financial disadvantage of landowners and labourers. One must add to these causes of poverty or lessened wealth the enormous expense of materials for the building and of weapons of defence. The well-to-do would in these circumstances need the money they had lent, and whether needing it or not, would be inclined, when they found the interest no longer paid, to call in what was lent (generally money) or to demand all available pledges.

We do not find among the Jews in Bible times any system of laws or customs governing the relation of lender and borrower,

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[1] The text of *Luc.* may be thus translated: 'Every one whom they sent (= who was sent) to the water (i. e. to fetch water) (went) each with his weapon to the water.'

Then there arose a great cry of the people and of their 5
wives against their brethren the Jews. For there were that 2
said, We, our sons and our daughters, are many: let us

such, for example, as prevailed among the Babylonians in the time of Hammurabi (*circa* 2200 B.C.), though even among them such laws were less complete than one would gather from Stanley Cook's book, *The Laws of Moses and the Code of Hammurabi* (1903)[1]. Read as a corrective C. H. W. Johns, *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws, Contracts and Letters* (1904)[2]. Among the Hebrews, as generally among the Babylonians[3], loans were made to the poor alone for the purpose of meeting special emergencies (bad crops, fire, &c.). Lending as an investment with the expectation of a good return was hardly known in those times. Hence the laws which forbade the claiming of interest are found perhaps first in the Deuteronomic code[4] (yet cf. Exod. xxii. 25, JE), but are continued in later codes[5] and reinforced in the Talmud[6]. The Egyptian laws condemned the charging of interest, and so does the Quran[7]; and the same is true of the Bedouin of the present day if what C. M. Doughty says is correct: 'The malicious subtlety of usury is foreign to the brotherly dealing of the nomad tribesmen[8].'

But that no strict law on this matter existed among the Hebrews is abundantly proved by the present chapter and by parts of the O.T., in which the practice of lending at interest is condemned. Indeed, many of the humanities prescribed in the relation between creditor and debtor, employer and employed, were found at a later time to be impracticable[9]. See Jer. xxxiv. 8 f., and on the whole subject consult Benzinger (*Encyc. Bib.*, 'Law and Justice,' § 16 and his later discussion in *Heb. Arch.*(2) (1907), p. 292 ff.: cf. p. 268 ff.). See further on verses 2, 7 and 11. The fact that at this time there was a capitalist or rich class shows that there had been a large return of exiles many years earlier, for the Jews left behind were poor and belonged to the least important families.

**1. a great cry:** the same words in Exod. xii. 30. There the cause was the oppression of the Egyptians, here the oppression of brother Jews, which made it harder to bear.

**the people:** i.e. for the poor, cf. vii. 5.

**their brethren the Jews:** see above.

**2. We, our sons,** &c.: read, 'We must give our sons and

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[1] See p. 228 ff. [2] See p. 250 ff. [3] Johns, *l. c.* [4] Deut. xxiii. 19 f.

[5] Lev. xxv. 36 f.; cf. Ps. xv. 5; Prov. xxviii. 8; Ezek. xviii. 7 f., 12 f., 16 f.

[6] *Baba Meṣiah*, 61 b. [7] xxx. 38. [8] *Arabia Deserta*, i. 318.

[9] See the passages adduced under note 5.

3 get corn, that we may eat and live. Some also there were
that said, We are mortgaging our fields, and our vine-
yards, and our houses: let us get corn, because of the
4 dearth. There were also that said, We have borrowed
money for the king's tribute *upon* our fields and our vine-
5 yards. Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren,
our children as their children: and, lo, we bring into
bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and
some of our daughters are brought into bondage *already*:

daughters in pledge,' prefixing one Hebrew letter (*'aîn*) to the word translated 'many': no other change in the consonantal text is necessary. See ver. 3, where the same combination of Hebrew words occurs. The participle thus restored has the force of expressing what is to be, must be, as the same participle in ver. 3 'We must,' &c.

Among the Hebrews[1], as among the Babylonians[2], a man could sell his wife and children to wipe off a debt, but they had to be set at liberty in the seventh year[3]: the Babylonians lessened the years of bondage to three[4].

**let us get:** render, 'so that we may buy,' &c., which the Hebrew allows and the sense demands.

**3. We are mortgaging,** &c.: render, 'We must mortgage,' &c. The verb (a participle here and as amended in ver. 2) is the same as that rendered above (see on ver. 2), 'give . . . in pledge.' In both cases the meaning is the same, 'to give as security.' Property also returned to the family that originally owned it in the seventh, i. e. in the Sabbatic year; see on ver. 2.

**let us,** &c.: render, 'that we may buy corn,' as in ver. 3.

**4.** Nothing fresh appears in this verse, for it is simply a repetition in other words of what ver. 3 says, except that the purpose of the loan is mentioned. Probably it is a marginal gloss on ver. 3 which found its way into the text as many other such glosses have done.

**5. flesh:** the word has often the meaning 'a human being,' 'a personality'; cf. 'all flesh,' &c. in Gen. vi. 12, 'We are what our rich brethren are; we have the same human characteristics; yet our children are their slaves.'

**we bring:** render, 'we must bring,' see on ver. 2.

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[1] Lev. xxv. 39-41.

[2] Cook, *op. cit.* 229.

[3] Exod. xxi. 2: so originally in Lev. xxv. 40, according to most modern scholars.

[4] *Hammurabi Laws*, No. 117.

neither is it in our power to help it; for other men have
our fields and our vineyards. And I was very angry when 6
I heard their cry and these words. Then I consulted 7
with myself, and contended with the nobles and the [a]rulers,
and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his
brother. And I held a great assembly against them. And 8
I said unto them, We after our ability have [b]redeemed our
brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen;
and would ye even sell your brethren, and should they be
sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found

---

[a] Or, *deputies* [b] Heb. *bought.*

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**for other men,** &c.: we are hopelessly in their power, since they hold our land whence alone we might obtain the money to redeem our children. *Luc.*, LXX read, 'the nobles' instead of **other men,** which last the M. T., Ar., Syr., and Vulg. read. The former agrees best with the phraseology of this book and is probably primary. The Hebrew writing of the two words is not very dissimilar.

6-11. *Nehemiah rebukes the guilty ones, and demands both restitution and reform.*

**7. nobles, rulers:** see on ii. 16.

**Ye exact usury:** the same verb is used in ver. 10 by Nehemiah to describe what he himself and his brethren and servants did, but here it is accompanied by a cognate accusative which seems to add the idea of lending on interest not (as Rawlinson) upon pledge, which was allowed; see preliminary remarks to this chapter.

**assembly:** a feminine form of the noun translated 'congregation' in ver. 13 and in Ezra ii. 64 (see on). As there is no difference of meaning, the ending having the force of our indefinite article, the same English word ('congregation') ought to have been employed.

**8. have redeemed:** lit., 'obtained by purchase,' referring to Jews whom on his arrival he found working off debts in the service of non-Jews.

**heathen:** lit., 'nations,' a word which in the plural came to have the sense of non-Jewish peoples and to take on an ethical colouring. It is often translated in the English Bible by 'Gentiles' owing to the fact that in the Vulgate *gentes* is the word for the Heb. *goim* (nations), though *gentiles* in Latin denotes strictly members of the aristocratic families; see *SDB.* article 'Nations.'

9 never a word. Also I said, The thing that ye do is no
good : ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, be
10 cause of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? An
I likewise, my brethren and my servants, do lend them
money and corn on usury. I pray you, let us leave of
11 this usury. Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day
their fields, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and thei
houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of th
12 corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them. Then
said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing

---

**9. I said:** so rightly *qr.* and all the versions; but the Hebrew consonantal text (*keth*) has 'he said.'

**to walk in the fear of our God** = to walk, i. e. to conduct oneself as proper respect for the authority of God would dictate; i. e. to keep His commandments; see Acts ix. 31 and cf. Deut. x. 12; see on ver. 15 ('the fear of God').

**because of the reproach,** &c. : that the reproach which our enemies fasten on us of oppressing each other contrary to the Divine law may cease, or, as many, 'to obviate or prevent such a reproach.'

**10. And I . . . do lend:** but without interest, see below.

**on usury:** 'at interest.' Since, however, the Hebrew seems to mean 'to lend without interest' these words are to be omitted.

**11. even this day:** the Hebrew phrase = 'immediately.'

**the hundredth part:** read (inserting one Hebrew consonant), 'the interest' (on the money, &c.). One hundredth per cent. per annum would be too small, and so commentators have said that the interest implied was paid monthly (as sometimes in ancient Babylon), making it twelve per cent. per annum, about the average interest charged in Babylon. But nothing in the context or in other parts of the O. T. supports this. It is far simpler with most modern scholars to make the slight change in the text noticed above.

12 f. *The guilty ones promise to make amends for the past and to alter their ways in the future.*

**12. We will restore,** &c. : this resolution represents probably the result of prolonged negotiations. The historian gives the bare facts only. In any case the enormous influence of the cup-bearer stands out in a clear light.

of them; so will we do, even as thou sayest. Then I
called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they
should do according to this promise. Also I shook out 13
my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his
house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise;
even thus be he shaken out and emptied. And all
the congregation said, Amen, and praised the LORD.
And the people did according to this promise. More- 14
over from the time that I was appointed to be their
governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year
even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the
king, *that is*, twelve years, I and my brethren have not

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**the priests** administer the oath because it was a religious action; see Num. v. 19–22.

**took an oath** (of the creditors): the oath occupied a large place among the Hebrews. To violate it was supposed to bring down the Divine malediction. Sometimes the curse implied was explicitly added to increase the solemnity of the act of swearing; see Num. v. 21, and on the next verse.

**13. I shook out my lap**: i.e. the fold in the bosom of the dress capable of serving the purposes of a pocket.

Nehemiah's symbolical action amounts to a curse upon any one who violated the oath; see Acts xviii. 6 and above on ver. 12; cf. Acts xxiii. 2 'the Jews bound themselves under a curse.'

**his labour**: the Hebrew word denotes also (as here) the fruits or produce of labour.

**be he shaken out**: see Job xxxviii. 13.

**congregation**: see on Ezra ii. 64 and cf. ver. 7 above.

**the people**: the Jews generally carried into practice what the congregation had approved.

14–19. *Nehemiah's personal generosity and self-denial.*

**14.** By surrendering the pay to which as governor he was entitled Nehemiah was relieving his fellow countrymen who would have had to be taxed to find it.

**twentieth year . . . of Artaxerxes**: i.e. 445 B.C. The king was Artaxerxes I; see on ii. 1.

**unto the two and thirtieth year**: i.e. to 433 B.C., twelve years. See on ii. 6 as to the great length of this period of absence.

**my brethren**: Nehemiah's retinue.

15 eaten the bread of the governor. But the former governors that were before me [a]were chargeable unto the people, and took of them bread and wine, [b]beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants [c]bare rule over the people:
16 but so did not I, because of the fear of God. Yea, also I [d]continued in the work of this wall, neither bought we any

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[a] Or, *laid burdens upon* [b] Or, *at the rate of* Or, *afterward*
[c] Or, *lorded over* [d] Heb. *held fast to.*

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**bread:** here, as often in English, food, which is perhaps the primary sense of the Hebrew word. In Arabic the cognate word = 'flesh'; cf. ver. 15 'bread and wine' = the whole of what was served at table.

**15. the former governors . . . before me:** a redundancy, much in the manner of Nehemiah, see v. 13 'shake,' 'be shaken,' and vi. 2. The first of Nehemiah's predecessors in the governorship of the Jewish post-exilic community was Zerubbabel. We know nothing of those intervening, though in the Sachau Papyri, i. 1, we read of a successor Bagohi. It is natural to infer from Nehemiah that as far as he knew Zerubbabel took the full governor's pay.

**and took of them,** &c.: render, 'for (as the price of, in Hebrew the '*beth* of price') bread and wine daily forty shekels of silver' (about £5).

**beside:** the Hebrew word (= 'after,' 'afterwards') makes no suitable sense here. Read (with the Vulg.), 'daily,' the form occurring in ver. 18 'for one day' (= 'for each day'). A glance at the Hebrew will show how easily a copyist could mistake one for the other; 'after' and 'one' are written almost alike. The word lost is much like that preceding it, and was probably confounded with it.

**bare rule:** the Hebrew word itself (the same root as in Sultan, which is Arabic) = 'to exercise power' and so 'to rule.' It may have come to have a bad meaning as 'to lord it,' but we have no other instance of the sense. Perhaps we should read with the Vulg. 'oppressed.'

**but so did not I:** in Hebrew the pronoun is emphatic, 'but as for me I acted not so.' Compare Paul's similar claim in 1 Cor. ix. 12.

**16. I continued,** &c.: the Hebrew word is identical with that used for to repair (the wall) (see on iii. 4), but with the preposition following it here (*b*) it = to put the hand to, lay hold of, 'I gave myself whole-heartedly to the work of restoring the wall,' i. e. probably superintending the undertaking as regards actual building, defence, and finance. Nehemiah is not mentioned in ch. iii as undertaking any special portion of the wall.

**neither bought we,** &c.: he was too absorbed in the main

and: and all my servants were gathered thither unto the
work. Moreover there were at my table of the Jews and 17
the [a] rulers an hundred and fifty men, beside those that
came unto us from among the heathen that were round
about us. Now that which was prepared for one day was 18
one ox and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared
for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine:
yet for all this I demanded not the bread of the governor,

[a] Or, *deputies*

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purpose of his visit to have time or inclination for speculating in land. There could, of course, have been no harm in itself in making speculative purchases of land. Perhaps he means that he did not take any advantage of the people's poverty to buy at low prices.

**17.** According to the M.T. three classes would seem to have been entertained at Nehemiah's tables: (1) Jews; (2) rulers—also Jews; (3) representatives of the Jews whose homes were contiguous to the lands inhabited by the surrounding nations.

It seems to the present writer that the words **the Jews** are simply a gloss from the margin to inform the reader that (in the glosser's opinion) the persons intended by class 3 above were Jews. If the M.T. is kept, it is best, with Bertheau, to explain **the Jews** as generic, the 'and' before the two following classes being explicative, as this conjunction often is in Hebrew (so Greek *καί*), 'The Jews both . . . and.' Van Hoonacker takes **the Jews** to = the poor people (see on ver. 1), and the third class above to denote representatives (emissaries) of the nations around. But this last view is exceedingly improbable, though it is used by the author to support his theory as to the priority of Nehemiah and Ezra. Bertholet makes a clever guess, suggesting that the Hebrew for 'the Jews' is a corruption of the words for 'and it happened daily that.'

**the heathen:** see on ver. 8.

**18. that which was prepared,** &c.: see 1 Kings iv. 22 f. Solomon's daily supply.

**for one day** = 'for each day.'

**once in ten days,** &c.: by omitting one letter from the Heb. (*b* = 'in' or 'with') the sense conveyed by the E.VV. can be legitimately obtained from the Heb., hardly otherwise. To give the Heb. in separate English words as has been done in order to show that the clause has no meaning is very misleading, as the syntactical relation—quite momentous in Heb.—is lost sight of. The thought is, however, rather strange, a fresh supply of all kinds of wine was brought to the governor's official (?) residence every ten days.

19 because the bondage was heavy upon this people. Remember unto me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

6 Now it came to pass, when it was reported to Sanballat and Tobiah, and to Geshem the Arabian, and unto the rest of our enemies, that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though even unto that
2 time I had not set up the doors in the gates;) that Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in *one of* the villages in the plain of Ono.

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**the bondage:** rather, the work to be done (in connexion with the walls).

**19.** See xiii. 14, 22, 31, for a similar prayer; cf. ver. 5 and vi. 9, 14. Such naïve prayers abound in oriental and especially in Arabic books. Bertholet (Comm.) cites a similar petition from an Assyrian inscription.

### VI. 1–19. COMPLETION OF THE WALLS NOTWITHSTANDING OPPOSITION FROM WITHOUT (1–9) AND TREACHERY WITHIN (10–19).

1–4. *Sanballat and his confederates endeavour to entice Nehemiah into the country to kill him.*

**1. Sanballat . . . Tobiah:** see on ii. 10.

**Geshem:** see on ii. 19.

**the rest,** &c.: perhaps the Ashdodites (see iv. 7).

**doors in the gates:** see on iii. 3. The Heb. translated 'gate' denotes here, as often, 'the gateway structure' with roof (2 Sam. xviii. 24), and upper chamber (2 Sam. xix. 1). The work of inserting the doors had been undertaken (see iii. 3, 6, 14 f.), but it had been found impracticable up to the present to complete this part of the work owing perhaps to the labour and expense involved: see on xiii. 19.

**2. Sanballat and Geshem:** why not Tobiah also? Probably because he was Sanballat's secretary (see ver. 17). In ver. 1 (M.T., LXX, but not Syr., *Luc.*, and several Heb. MSS.) he is coupled with Sanballat, 'to Sanballat and Tobiah and to Geshem.'

**let us meet together:** another of Nehemiah's redundancies (see on v. 15; cf. v. 13). See, however, also Job ii. 11.

**in *one* of the villages:** Heb. 'in the villages,' which is intolerable. Read (with Siegfried, &c.) 'in Hakkepharim' (a place name): cf. the proper name *Kephirah* (='village') in vii. 29 and Ezra ii. 25.

**in the plain of Ono:** since Ono and Lod (Lydda) are often

But they thought to do me mischief. And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? 3 And they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner. 4 Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand; 5 wherein was written, It is reported among the nations, and [a]Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think 6

[a] In ver. 1, and elsewhere, *Geshem*.

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mentioned together as lying in close contiguity (see xi. 35; Ezra i. 33; 1 Chron. viii. 12) it may be inferred that Hakkepharim was some twenty miles to the north of Jerusalem and about eight to the east of Joppa. At such a distance the Jewish governor could be safely murdered, and in any case the work of rebuilding would be seriously retarded had he been successfully beguiled to such a far-off spot. Nehemiah could not then, had he been allowed to return, have brought the work to a close in less than two months (see on ver. 15).

**they thought:** Heb. 'purposed.'

**to do me mischief:** probably to assassinate him or to have him assassinated.

The noun rendered **mischief** occurs in 1 Sam xxiii. 9 (Saul); Esther viii. 13 (Haman).

**3. messengers:** the usual word for angels (Gen. xlviii. 16, &c.). Here as Deut. ii. 26, of men.

5–9. *Futile attempt to intimidate Nehemiah.*

**5. his servant:** was this Tobiah his secretary? See ver. 17. There was now in connexion with the open letter a part to play which required skill.

**with an open letter:** having failed four times with sealed letters intended for Nehemiah's eye alone he made a bid for greater success by sending a letter which was likely to meet the eyes of Nehemiah's ministers—the servant would see to this last. It was hoped that these ministers would accept Sanballat's view of the situation and influence their master. We read in Jer. xxxii. 9–14 of a sealed and unsealed contract, the latter being merely a copy attached to the clay envelope containing the other and exposed for consultation, the seal of the former being broken in cases of dispute only (see Driver, *Jeremiah*, 196 f.).

**letter:** see on ii. 7.

**6. nations:** the word translated heathen in v. 8 (see on).

to rebel; for which cause thou buildest the wall: and
thou wouldest be their king, according to these words.
7 And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee
at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now
shall it be reported to the king according to these words.
Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.
8 Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things
done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine
9 own heart. For they all would have made us afraid, saying,
Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be
not done. But now, [a] *O God*, strengthen thou my hands.

[a] Or, *I will strengthen my hands*

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Here the surrounding nations in league with Sanballat are meant.

**Gashmu:** see on ii. 19.

**think:** see on ver. 2.

**rebel:** see Ezra iv. 13 for a similar charge, made also in connexion with the rebuilding of the walls, showing that this section has nothing to do with the work of Ezra.

**thou buildest:** better 'rebuildest,' a sign of rebellion. Why these walls if not to defy the power of Persia? Yet they knew better (see ver. 8). The walls were for defence against the people around.

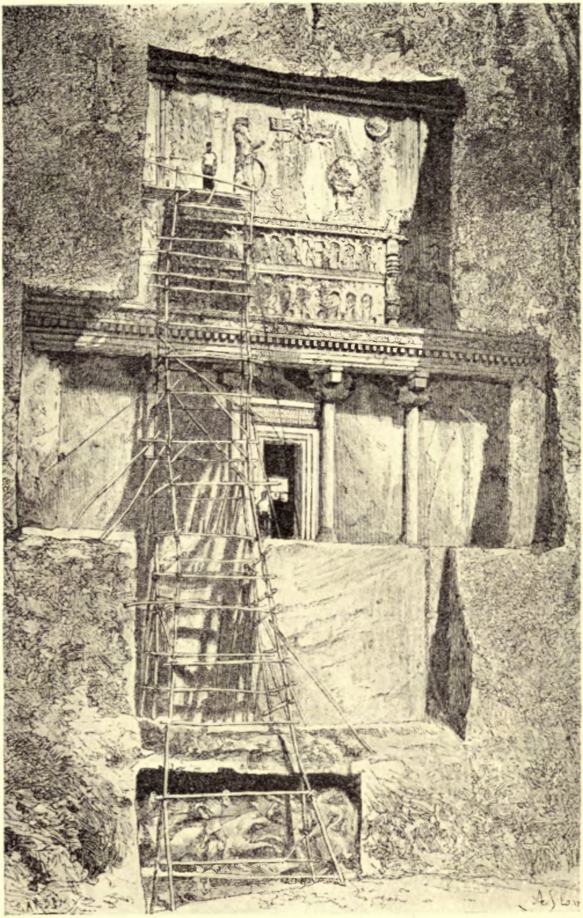
**thou wouldest be their king:** the participle in Heb. (see v. 3 f.) may mean 'thou wilt soon become king' (as a matter of fact), or 'thou art becoming king,' already on the road to that goal of thine.

**7. prophets:** there were prophets on Nehemiah's side as well as on the other (see ver. 10 ff.). No prophetic literature of this period seems to have come down to us.

**8. thou feignest:** Heb. 'thou ventest': lit. (cf. Ar.) 'causest to begin.' The same verb occurs in 1 Kings xii. 33.

**heart:** in the psychology of the Hebrews the word here (*lēb*) embraces the whole mind, feeling, will, and especially intellect, all supposed to have their physiological counterpart in the heart (see on Ps. cxix. 2, *Century Bible*).

**9. But now,** &c.: render, 'So now I strengthened my hands.' The Heb. permits and the versions and context support this rendering. The Divine Name is wholly absent from the M.T. The Heb. verb is the infinitive (or imperative?), which is frequently to be rendered by a tense form of the verb.



Tomb of Darius Hystaspis.

And I went unto the house of Shemaiah the son of 10
Delaiah the son of Mehetabel, who was shut up; and he
said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within
the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for
they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they
come to slay thee. And I said, Should such a man as I 11
flee? and who is there, that, being such as I, [a] would go
into the temple to save his life? I will not go in. And 12

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[a] Or, *could go into the temple and live*

10–14. *False prophets point out the difficulties and dangers of the work.*

**10. I went into the house of Shemaiah:** why was this done? Many say to obtain an oracle (Urim and Thummim?) for his guidance in a time of perplexity (see Jer. xxxvii. 17, xxxviii. 14). But Nehemiah does not seem to have shown either doubt or fear as to the course he should take (see ver. 3 ff.), and when this man gives his advice Nehemiah spurns it. Why could not Nehemiah visit this man or any other in a mere social way?

**Shemaiah:** nowhere else mentioned. He was apparently a prophet (see ver. 12) and a priest (see under next word).

**Delaiah:** the name appears in a list of priestly houses in 1 Chron. xxiv. 18. In the Sachau Papyri (i. 37) one of the two sons of Sanballat is so called.

**shut up:** probably ceremonially unclean, and therefore disqualified for entering the Temple; under a taboo (see 1 Sam. xxi. 7; 1 Kings xiv. 10; W. Robertson Smith, *Rel. Sem.*(2), 456).

**Let us meet together in the house of God:** since Shemaiah, though probably a priest, was for the time ceremonially excluded from the cultus, and no layman was allowed to enter the Temple building, the proposal now made involves the violation of two ritual laws. But Shemaiah was prepared to sacrifice religion to tactical considerations. His party was less strict than Nehemiah's in matters of 'the law of Moses.'

(let us) **shut:** the verb usually employed of shutting doors, not that in the word 'shut' noticed above.

**the doors of the temple:** referring to the two-leaved door (hence the plural) leading from the inner court into the house (1 Kings vi. 33), not the doors between the *haykal* (holy place) and the *debir* (most holy place) (1 Kings vi. 31).

**to slay:** showing that the idea of slaying him was spoken about.

11. *Nehemiah has too much courage to flee and too much conscience to violate the sanctity of the house of God.*

**to save his life:** in accordance with the primitive law of

I discerned, and, lo, God had not sent him: but he pronounced this prophecy against me: and Tobiah and
13 Sanballat had hired him. For this cause was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might
14 reproach me. Remember, O my God, Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and also the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

15 So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth *day* of
16 *the month* Elul, in fifty and two days. And it came to

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asylum connected with sanctuaries and altars. See Exod. xxi. 13; 1 Kings i. 50 f., ii. 28 (see note on former in *Century Bible*, J. Skinner); Mic. x. 53; W. R. Smith, *Rel. Sem.*(2), 138, 436; cf. Exod. xxix. 12; Lev. iv. 7 ff.

Nehemiah will not break what he regarded as a Divine law for the sake of saving his own life.

**to save his life:** lit. 'that he may live.'

**12. I discerned:** he could see behind appearances (cf. 2 Sam. iii. 36) that this man was inspired by the prospect of cash and not by any Divine impulse (see Jer. xxiii. 21, 32; Ezek. xiii. 2; and cf. Num. xvi. 28 and Jer. xxix. 19).

**13. For this cause was he hired:** the Heb. words so translated are no doubt a dittograph of the last clause of ver. 12 slightly changed, and must (with *Luc.*, Siegfried, &c.) be omitted. The English translation is here, as often, so well done as to largely hide the defects of the Heb.

**14. Remember:** for evil here, as in xiii. 29; cf. v. 19, xiii. 22, 31 ('remember for good').

**Noadiah** (= 'one who meets Yah'): nowhere else mentioned. For other prophetesses cf. Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Hannah.

15 f. *The work completed.*

**15. Elul:** the sixth month (August-September), the eleventh in the secular year as now observed (see on Ezra x. 17). It is not named in the O.T. except here, though it is mentioned in 1 Macc. xiv. 27.

**fifty and two days:** this may seem a very short interval of time for so great a task to be accomplished, but there are many considerations which make for the account here given. (1) It must have been a condition of Nehemiah's leave of absence that he

pass, when all our enemies heard *thereof*, that all the
heathen that were about us [a] feared, and were much cast
down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work
was wrought of our God. Moreover in those days the 17
nobles of Judah sent many letters unto Tobiah, and *the
letters* of Tobiah came unto them. For there were 18
many in Judah sworn unto him, because he was the son
in law of Shecaniah the son of Arah; and his son

[a] According to another reading, *saw*.

should expedite the work as much as possible. That he remained away twelve years was due to difficulties in reform and reorganization which could not be foreseen (see on ii. 6). (2) v. 16 gives the impression of great haste in the work. (3) The walls had not to be built but only rebuilt, and there are indications in ch. iii that large parts needed little or no repairing (see ver. 13, &c.). (4) It is exceedingly probable that others before Nehemiah had set about the restoration of the walls, though they were hindered and their work to some extent undone (see p. 160, BETWEEN EZRA and NEHEMIAH). (5) The materials for the building were for the most part ready to hand, for the old stones could be used for the new wall or parts of the wall.

According to Josephus (*Antiq.*, v. 7, 8) the builders took two years and four months for the work. Ewald following him in this would in the present verse insert 'two years,' reading therefore 'two years and fifty-two days,' which would, however, be less than the time given by Josephus to the extent of some two months. All the versions are in favour of the M.T., from which there are no good reasons for departing.

**16. were much cast down:** lit. 'fell very much,' an unique expression, though intelligible. It is better to make a small change in one word and to read (with Klostermann) 'and it was very wonderful in their eyes.'

**this work was wrought of our God:** a thought constantly in the mind of Nehemiah (see i. 5 f., &c.); cf. Ps. cxviii. 23, cxxvi. 2 f.

17–19. *Jewish noblemen conspire with Tobiah.*

**17. nobles:** see on ii. 16.

**letters:** see on ii. 7.

**18. sworn unto him:** upon his marrying into a Jewish family there would be on both sides an undertaking by oath, he to be loyal to his new people, they to be true to their new initiate.

**Arah:** see vii. 10; Ezra ii. 5.

Jehohanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the
9 son of Berechiah to wife. Also they spake of his good
deeds before me, and reported my words to him. *And*
Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear.

7 Now it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I
had set up the doors, and the porters and the singers
2 and the Levites were appointed, that I gave my brother
Hanani, and Hananiah the governor of the castle, charge
over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared

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**Meshullam**: see on iii. 4, 30.

**had taken . . . to wife**: see on ii. 10. In the East slaves not seldom rise to high positions and make grand marriages; cf. the Mameluke dynasties of Egypt. Some of the finest Arab poets were at first slaves.

**19.** Render, 'And they spake before me with regard to his words, and reported to him my words.'

**his good deeds**: Heb. 'his good' (qualities, words, deeds?), a mere adjective in the feminine (= neuter); read 'his words': so LXX; cf. Syr., 'my good words' and parallelism.

### VII. 1–$73^{a}$ + XI. 1 ff.

### Measures taken for the Defence of the City and the Increase of its Population.

1–3. *Provisions for the defence of the city.*

**1. doors**: see on iii. 3 and vi. 1.

**porters**: better 'gate-keepers,' the word being a denominative from the noun = 'gate' (see on Ezra ii. 42).

**singers . . . Levites**: probably an early addition to the text, so early that all the versions vouch for it. What had these Temple officials to do with the city gates? The older and many modern commentators say that Nehemiah appointed them to share the responsibility of guarding the gates because they could, above most Jerusalemites (cf. vi. 17–19), be trusted.

**2. Hanani**: see on i. 2: as a well-tried brother he could trust him as he could also **Hananiah**, the governor of the citadel or castle (see on ii. 8), who was really general of the city forces, perhaps a Persian official, though (cf. name) a Jew by nationality.

**he was a faithful man**: referring to Hananiah. His own brother's loyalty was too well known to need chronicling. Nehemiah did well for his cause in placing two men so trustworthy in general charge of Jerusalem.

God above many. And I said unto them, Let not the 3
gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand *on guard*, let them shut the doors, and bar ye them: and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one *to be*

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**3. I said:** correcting rightly (with all the ancient versions) the Heb. consonantal text, 'he said.'

**until the sun be hot:** until the sun has fully risen, perhaps no more is meant. The gates of Eastern cities are opened as soon as the sun rises. Is the phrase in the text intended to prevent a confusion between the sunshine and moonshine?

**and while they** (the porters) **stand:** the words *on guard* are inserted by our translators to supply the deficiencies of the M. T. The Heb. is in other respects peculiar and even inaccurate. It is better to make some changes in the text (see Bertholet) and to render, 'And while the sun is hot (= before sunset) let the doors be shut and barred.'

**let them shut . . . bar ye them:** both verbs are passive in the versions, and by a well-known idiom ('indefinite subject') the Heb. can be so rendered, making, however, a slight change in the second verb.

**shut:** the Heb. verb is found nowhere else in the O.T., though in the Talmud it has in the same form (*Hiph*) the same meaning.

**bar ye:** read passive third pers. 'let them bar' = 'let (them) be barred' (see before). The verb = 'to lay hands on,' 'seize,' but seems in 1 Kings vi. 10 to mean as here to 'apply the bars to.'

**appoint:** the verb is infinitive absolute, used as a strong imperative—so often. No textual change is therefore necessary. The persons addressed are Hanani and Hananiah.

**watches:** divisions of the night for the purpose of watching. Before the exile and for long afterwards the Hebrews had (as the Greeks and Babylonians) three watches of four hours each. In our Lord's day and for some time (how long?) before there were four (see Mark xiii. 35 and cf. Matt. xiv. 25; Mark vi. 48). See on Ps. xc. 4 and cxix. 148 (*Century Bible*).

These two men were to set up (lit. 'make to stand'), i. e. probably restore, a system of night-watches for (all) Jerusalem men, whereby each was to take his turn, and in doing so to stand sentinel in front of his own house. How all this was arranged is a matter of detail about which the surviving writings of the annalist tell us nothing, but there can be no doubt it would be seen to that no extensive portion of the city was at any time without its watchman. There was certainly but one set of watchmen, not many, as some (Bertheau, &c.) have thought, for no difference of functions is implied.

4 over against his house. Now the city was wide and large:
but the people were few therein, and the houses were
5 not builded. And my God put into my heart to gather
together the nobles, and the [a] rulers, and the people, that
they might be reckoned by genealogy. And I found the

[a] Or, *deputies*

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4–73$^a$ + xi. 1 ff. *Measures for increasing the population of Jerusalem.*

**4.** (the city was) **wide:** Heb. 'wide on both hands,' the literal sense of the phrase in Ps. civ. 25. The words take on, however, as here, the meaning of extending far in all directions (see Gen. xxxiv. 2, &c.).

**houses were not builded:** how, then, could the inhabitants when watching stand before them? The verb rendered 'builded' means 'rebuilt,' and even 'repair,' as in ch. iii. The wall is said to be rebuilt, though much of it was perfect. So here we are probably to understand that the work of restoring the houses in a general way had not been undertaken for lack of a sufficient population, for the houses taken would be set right each by its occupants. The surmise of Paul Haupt that 'houses' refers to the families which had not been reorganized is too fanciful, though favoured by the following verses and not opposed to usage as regards the word 'house.'

**5. my God put into my heart,** &c.: see ii. 12 and Ezra vii. 27.

**nobles . . . rulers:** see on ii. 16.

**people:** see on v. 1, 17.

**that they might be reckoned by genealogy** = that they might be allocated each to his tribe, clan, and family: see on Ezra ii. 62.

Most scholars agree that the purpose for which the register of families, &c., was now called for and supplied was with a view to the repeopling of Jerusalem. A proportion of the country population would have to be transferred to the capital, but only such as were pure-blooded Jews (see xi. 1 ff.). In order to be able to prove the possession of this qualification a genealogical register was necessary, and was found where the author of Ezra ii found his—in fact, it is the same list. This interpretation assumed an immediate connexion between ver. 73$^a$ and xi. 1, the section 73$^b$–x being regarded as an extract from the biography of Ezra which has accidentally or otherwise got away from its right place. There is not a word in this chapter indicating explicitly the *raison d'être* of this list at this time, but the explanation given above is at least a reasonable one. See further on xi.

**I found the book of the genealogy,** &c: where? perhaps in the Temple archives: see Introduction to Ezra ii.

book of the genealogy of them which came up at the first,
and I found written therein : [$\mathbf{T}_R$] [a]These are the children 6
of the province, that went up out of the captivity of
those that had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar
the king of Babylon had carried away, and that returned
unto Jerusalem and to Judah, every one unto his city;
who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, 7
Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth,
Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah. The number of the men of
the people of Israel: the children of Parosh, two thousand 8
an hundred and seventy and two. The children of 9
Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two. The children 10
of Arah, six hundred fifty and two. The children of 11
Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two
thousand and eight hundred *and* eighteen. The children 12
of Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four. The 13
children of Zattu, eight hundred forty and five. The 14
children of Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.
The children of Binnui, six hundred forty and eight. The 15, 1
children of Bebai, six hundred twenty and eight. The children 17
of Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty and
two. The children of Adonikam, six hundred threescore 18
and seven. The children of Bigvai, two thousand threescore 19
and seven. The children of Adin, six hundred fifty 20
and five. The children of Ater, of Hezekiah, ninety and 21
eight. The children of Hashum, three hundred twenty 22
and eight. The children of Bezai, three hundred twenty 23
and four. The children of Hariph, an hundred and 24
twelve. The children of Gibeon, ninety and five. The 25, 2
men of Bethlehem and Netophah, an hundred fourscore

[a] See Ezra ii. 1, &c.

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6–73[a]. *List of those who returned.* As this list is practically identical with that in Ezra ii the reader must for lack of space be referred to the general and detailed remarks on that chapter.

27 and eight. The men of Anathoth, an hundred twenty and
29 eight. The men of Beth-azmaveth, forty and two. The
men of Kiriath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven
30 hundred forty and three. The men of Ramah and Geba,
31 six hundred twenty and one. The men of Michmas, an
32 hundred and twenty and two. The men of Beth-el and
33 Ai, an hundred twenty and three. The men of the other
34 Nebo, fifty and two. The children of the other Elam,
35 a thousand two hundred fifty and four. The children
36 of Harim, three hundred and twenty. The children of
37 Jericho, three hundred forty and five. The children
of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and
38 one. The children of Senaah, three thousand nine
39 hundred and thirty. The priests: the children of Jedaiah,
of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.
41 The children of Immer, a thousand fifty and two. The
children of Pashhur, a thousand two hundred forty and
42 seven. The children of Harim, a thousand *and* seven-
43 teen. The Levites: the children of Jeshua, of Kadmiel,
44 of the children of [a] Hodevah, seventy and four. The
singers: the children of Asaph, an hundred forty and
45 eight. The porters: the children of Shallum, the child-
ren of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of
Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai,
46 an hundred thirty and eight. The Nethinim: the child-
ren of Ziha, the children of Hasupha, the children of
47 Tabbaoth; the children of Keros, the children of Sia,
48 the children of Padon; the children of Lebana, the child-
49 ren of Hagaba, the children of Salmai; the children
of Hanan, the children of Giddel, the children of Gahar;
50 the children of Reaiah, the children of Rezin, the child-
51 ren of Nekoda; the children of Gazzam, the children of

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[a] Another reading is, *Hodeiah.*

Uzza, the children of Paseah; the children of Besai, 52
the children of Meunim, the children of [a] Nephushesim;
the children of Bakbuk, the children of Hakupha, the 53
children of Harhur; the children of Bazlith, the children 54
of Mehida, the children of Harsha; the children of 55
Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of Temah;
the children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha. The 56,
children of Solomon's servants: the children of Sotai,
the children of Sophereth, the children of Perida; the 58
children of Jaala, the children of Darkon, the children of
Giddel; the children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, 59
the children of Pocherethhazzebaim, the children of
Amon. All the Nethinim, and the children of Solomon's 60
servants, were three hundred ninety and two. And these 61
were they which went up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha,
Cherub, Addon, and Immer: but they could not shew
their fathers' houses, nor their seed, whether they were of
Israel: the children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, 62
the children of Nekoda, six hundred forty and two. And 63
of the priests: the children of Hobaiah, the children of
Hakkoz, the children of Barzillai, which took a wife of
the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called
after their name. These sought their register *among* those 64
that were reckoned by genealogy, but it was not found:
therefore [b] were they deemed polluted and put from the
priesthood. And the [c] Tirshatha said unto them, that 65
they should not eat of the most holy things, till there
stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim. The whole 66
congregation together was forty and two thousand three
hundred and threescore, beside their menservants and 67
their maidservants, of whom there were seven thousand

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[a] Another reading is, *Nephishesim.*

[b] Heb. *they were polluted from the priesthood.* [c] Or, *governor*

three hundred thirty and seven: and they had two hun-
68 dred forty and five singing men and singing women. Their
horses were seven hundred thirty and six; their mules,
69 two hundred forty and five; *their* camels, four hun-
dred thirty and five; *their* asses, six thousand seven
70 hundred and twenty. And some from among the heads
of fathers' *houses* gave unto the work. The Tirshatha
gave to the treasury a thousand darics of gold, fifty basons,
71 five hundred and thirty priests' garments. And some of
the heads of fathers' *houses* gave into the treasury of the
work twenty thousand darics of gold, and two thousand
72 and two hundred [a] pound of silver. And that which the
rest of the people gave was twenty thousand darics of gold,
and two thousand pound of silver, and threescore and
73 seven priests' garments. So the priests, and the Levites,
and the porters, and the singers, and some of the people,
and the Nethinim, [$\mathrm{C_E}$] and all Israel, dwelt in their cities.
[b] And when the seventh month was come, the child-

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[a] Heb. *maneh*. [b] See Ezra iii. 1.

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THE REFORMS OF EZRA, CONTINUING THE HISTORY OF EZRA X.

vii. $73^b$–viii. 12 (= 1 Esd. ix. 37–55). *The public reading of the law and its effect on the people.* This section forms a natural sequel to Ezra x: see Introduction to Ezra ix. f.

vii. $73^b$–viii. 8. *The reading and expounding of the law.*

vii. $73^b$ and viii. 1 have so much in common with Ezra iii. 1 that some connexion seems likely, especially as in both cases a genealogical register precedes. The resemblances are probably due to the fact that the writer of the present paragraph had the other before him. vii. $73^b$ might well be an interpolation, though it has the support of all the versions.

**$73^b$. the seventh month:** i. e. Tishri (see on Ezra iii. 1). What year is meant we are not told, but the inquiry regarding the mixed marriages was brought to an end in the tenth month of 457 B. C. (see Ezra x. 17 and the context), the putting away of the strange wives occurring on the first day of the following year, i. e. Nisan 1, 456. It seems likely that the 'seventh month' of the present verse belongs to the year last named. The coinci-

en of Israel were in their cities. And all the people 8
gathered themselves together as one man into the broad
place that was before the water gate; and they spake unto
Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses,
which the LORD had commanded to Israel. And Ezra the 2

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dence of popular assemblies meeting in Tishri at widely separated periods (Ezra iii. 1 and here) need occasion no surprise, since in it the most important festivals were held—Atonement, Tabernacles, &c. Besides, originally, as now, this month began the new year, and this might well suggest a new start in life, made more possible by having the law of their life made known to the people.

**1. broad place:** see on iii. 26 and Ezra x. 9.

**water gate:** see on iii. 26.

**and they spake . . . to bring:** the Hebrew means 'they gave orders . . . that he should bring,' the Hebrew as in Esther i. 17 (R.V. 'commanded') and iv. 13 (R.V. 'bade'). Since Ezra had brought with him a copy of the law (Ezra vii. 25), it has been ever regarded as surprising that he should have so long withheld it, and hence Winckler joins the present chapter immediately to Ezra viii, though the evidently close connexion between Ezra viii and ix makes this supposition an impossible one: see p. 133 f.

(Ezra) **the scribe:** read with 1 Esdras 'the priest and scribe' (see verses 2, 4, 9).

**the book of the law of Moses:** called in ver. 2 'the law,' and in ver. 5 'the book,' the former indicating its contents and the latter its form (the Hebrew rendered 'book' means in the O. T. 'roll,' though there is also for the latter a distinct word). The Hebrew *torah*, translated 'law,' means strictly 'teaching,' 'instruction.' In Ps. lxxviii. 1 'my law' is parallel to 'the words of my mouth.' It came to denote especially the Divine will as revealed through prophets and priests, and hence soon acquired the sense 'law.' In post-biblical Hebrew it is the technical term for the Pentateuch, but it never has that meaning in the O. T. The law which Ezra brought and published was much smaller in its scope than the 'Five Books,' and did not contain the whole of the Priestly Code, though largely coinciding with it. The early religious laws of the Hebrews came soon to be connected with the name of Moses, the traditional legislator of the nation, just as the religious songs were at an early time ascribed to the David of Chronicles, David the organizer of the Temple Psalmody. See for a fuller discussion of the nature and extent of Ezra's law, p. 8 ff.

priest brought the law before the congregation, both men and women, and all that could hear with understanding,
3 upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the broad place that was before the water gate [a] from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women, and of those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were *attentive* unto

[a] Heb. *from the light.*

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**2. congregation:** see on Ezra ii. 64.

The old tradition that Ezra established and presided over an institution called the Great Synagogue, which in the interval between the prophets and the scribes superintended Jewish affairs, arose out of the *ad hoc* assemblies described in Neh. viii–x, and has not a vestige of support in the O. T., though it is implied in the Mishna (*Pirqe Abot*, 1). Elias Levita (d. 1549) started the view, afterwards so generally held, that the O. T. Canon was fixed by this council with Ezra at its head, though it is now quite certain that many parts of the O. T. were not even written until centuries later. It is strange to find a modern Jewish scholar like Dr. Schechter[1] adhering still to this tradition, though its absurdity has been proved by Kuenen (see his Collected Essays, edited and put into German by Budde, p. 125 ff.): cf. W. Robertson Smith, *OTJC.*(2), 169 f. (n.).

**and all that could hear with understanding:** better (so Heb.) 'all that understood as they heard.' Of course children are meant (see x. 28 (29)). The Hebrew verb, which = 'to understand,' has also the causative sense 'to cause to understand,' as in verses 7, 9, &c. (see on Ezra viii. 16). This is according to a usage well known to Hebrew and Arabic scholars ('Inner Hiphil').

**the first day of the seventh month:** a great day among the Jews (see Lev. xxiii. 23–25; Num. xxix. 1–6, post-exilic passages). From the time of Alexander the Great Jews have kept this day as their New Year day. In Nehemiah's day the importance attached to the day seems a survival of early usage, for it was in Nisan that the year began in the centuries immediately following the exile. See on Ezra x. 17.

**3. from early morning:** Heb. (not as in the R.Vm. 'but') 'from the time it began to be light.'

**until midday,** when the excessive heat made further standing in the open impracticable. Most Orientals have about this time of the day a long siesta.

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[1] See *Studies in Judaism*, 2nd series, pp. 67 and 105 f.

the book of the law. And Ezra the scribe stood upon a 4
[a] pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Uriah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchijah, and Hashum, and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, *and*

[a] Heb. *tower*.

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4. (Ezra) **the scribe:** read (with 1 Esdras) 'the priest and scribe,' as in ver. 1 (see on).

**pulpit:** the Hebrew word is the ordinary one for 'tower,' but means literally 'what is high.' Here one may think of a wooden platform capable of holding over a dozen (or over fourteen) men. A pulpit in the modern sense is of course out of the question, and for that reason the use of the word is misleading and unfortunate.

(made) **for the purpose:** Syr., *Luc.*, and Vulg. (varying the Hebrew vowels) read 'to speak' (on). The LXX omits the clause.

**and beside him,** &c.: the number of men (Levites?) on Ezra's right and left hand respectively differ in the various authorities as follows: M.T. and Syr., six and seven; the LXX (best MSS.), six and four; *Luc.*, seven and seven; Vulg., six and six; 1 Esdras, seven and six. As a copyist is more likely to omit than to insert, *Luc.* (seven on both hands) is more likely to represent the original text, though the number twelve (six on each side) would correspond to the number of tribes, and is therefore often preferred. Apart from omission in the smaller lists, the names are in the main identical. The names here mentioned seem, as Bertheau points out, to stand for individuals and not, as in the names in iii, in ver. 7 and in ix. 4, x. 9, the names of clans or families.

Who were these fourteen (or twelve?) men? Probably priests, though not (as Rawlinson) 'chief priests of the course which was at the time performing the temple service.' Some of the names in this list appear in x. 2-9 as priests, as Malchiah, Meshullam, and perhaps Maaseiah (? = Maaziah), though in the latter the names stand for clans or houses. The law now made public by Ezra had been gradually evolved within the priestly circle before, during, and after the exile, and as in it the rights and privileges of the priests were safeguarded, one would expect to see Ezra supported by the priesthood on so memorable an occasion as this. Why, however, do we not read of the attendance and support of the high-priest, who in the new community had been accorded so favoured a place? Perhaps envy of Ezra's assumed position kept this official away, not, surely, opposition to

5 Meshullam. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and 6 when he opened it, all the people stood up: and Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with the lifting up of their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped 7 the LORD with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand

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the publication of the law up to now esoteric in the priesthood, for its publication could not but promote the prestige and power of the high-priesthood.

**5. opened the book** = unrolled the parchment roll: see Luke iv. 17. Bound books in the modern sense were not known until A. D. 300. Even then the writing material was parchment or vellum.

**all the people stood up:** according to Rabbinical tradition it was the custom from the time of Moses onwards for the people to stand while the law was being read. Standing was a mark of respect: see Judges iii. 20 and perhaps Job xxxvii. 14. Herzfeld quotes the latter passage for his rendering here 'stood still.'

**6. and Ezra blessed,** &c.: in the modern synagogue prayers are offered when the law is taken from its keeping-place (the *haykal*) and when it is returned. See the Jewish Prayer Book, Sabbath morning service.

**Amen:** lit. 'firm,' 'established'; then as adverb 'certainly,' 'assuredly.' See v. 13; Deut. xxvii. 14 ff.; 1 Kings i. 36; Jer. xi. 5, xxviii. 6, all pre-exilic passages except the first, showing that the word was in use before the exile. Its liturgical use meets us in post-exilic writings only, as in Num. v. 22; 1 Chron. xvi. 36; Ps. cvi. 48, &c., though one cannot therefore say positively that this latter use was unknown in pre-exilic times.

**with the lifting up of their hands:** see on Ezra ix. 5.

**7. Jeshua,** &c.: of the thirteen names seven are mentioned as Levites elsewhere (see ix. 5 and x. 9–14). The LXX has the three first names only, the Vulgate agreeing with the M. T., and the Syr. having a smaller number—eleven. The names all stand for the families so called (cf. Jeshua), though of course they were originally personal.

**and** (the Levites): omit with Vulg. and 1 Esdras. If retained it is the explicative 'and' (= 'even').

the law: and the people *stood* in their place. And they 8
read in the book, in the law of God, [a] distinctly; and
they gave the sense, [b] so that they understood the reading.
And Nehemiah, which was the Tirshatha, and Ezra the 9

[a] Or, *with an interpretation* [b] Or, *and caused* them *to understand*

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**and the people *stood* in their place:** the word italicized occurs in 2 Chron. xxx. 16, and has perhaps to be restored here: see Neh. ix. 3, where a verb of similar import occurs. The sense is 'the people stood in the place set apart for them.'

**8.** Render, 'And they read in the book of the law of God, uttering the words distinctly and giving the sense (of the words) and the (connected) meaning at the (= each) section.'

**they read:** perhaps Ezra read the section (*perashah*), the Levites reading the prepared interpretation.

**in the law:** omit one letter repeated by mistake and read 'of the law.'

**distinctly:** see on Ezra iv. 18. The form of the word has to be altered so as to assimilate it with the verbal form following, both being then infinitive absolutes used gerundially: see the translation above. A noun cognate with the verbal form occurs in Esther iv. 7 ('exact sum') and x. 2 ('full account').

(gave) **the sense:** i. e. the meaning of the words.

**so that they understood:** make a slight change in the Hebrew and thus get a noun parallel to that translated 'sense.' The word thus obtained implies a deeper knowledge, one involving a perception of the relation of the separate things considered. The same two words are also in parallelism in 1 Chron. xxii. 12; 2 Chron. ii. 11. It is obviously a mistake to make the writer mean that as the people were ignorant of Hebrew the original text had to be turned into Aramaic. The Jews had not lost their knowledge of Hebrew in the exile, as the writings of Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c., show.

**the reading:** we should probably render 'at the (= each) section,' a common meaning of the word in Rabbinical Hebrew.

9-12. *Ezra commands the people to rejoice and not to weep.*

**9. Nehemiah . . . the Tirshatha:** this whole clause is certainly to be omitted, as is suggested by the isolated mention of Nehemiah here, as in x. 2, and by the varied forms taken by the clause in the Versions. If this leader were on the scene at this time he could not have played a great part in the reforms now going forward. In 1 Esdras we have simply 'Attharates,' which, as 1 Esd. v. 40 shows, is given as a proper name. In the Syr. 'Nehemiah the high-priest' is the phrase, whereas in the LXX it is simply 'Nehemiah.' *Luc.* and the Vulg. agree with the M.T.

priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people,
said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD
your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept,
10 when they heard the words of the law. Then he said
unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet,
and send portions unto him for whom nothing is prepared:
for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye grieved;
11 for the joy of the LORD is your [a] strength. So the Levites
stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the

[a] Or, *strong hold*

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**Tirshatha:** see on Ezra ii. 63, where this epithet (not an official title) is applied to Zerubbabel. Nehemiah is never so described; he is called 'Governor' (*pekhah*): see on Ezra viii. 36.

(Ezra) **the priest the scribe:** see verses 1, 4.

**the Levites that taught:** see on Ezra viii. 16. This was their function; Ezra seems to have only read the portion to be explained: see on ver. 8.

**This day is holy:** see on ver. 1. It was the new moon of the seventh month.

**mourn not,** &c.: note how in an earlier age the introduction of the Deuteronomic law was followed by weeping, as the publication of Ezra's law is now (see 2 Kings xxii. 11, 19). The people saw their sins in a new light when the standard of perfect conduct was brought before them. But festal days were intended to be times of rejoicing (see next verse).

**10. he** (said): i. e. Ezra: see on ver. 9.

**eat the fat, and drink the sweet:** i. e. eat and drink the best you can get; do not fast in any degree, it is high festival time.

**send portions:** all festivals among the Semites were seasons of social conviviality, to which the sojourner, orphan, widow, &c., were to be invited (Deut. xvi. 11, 14). Portions of what was offered were sent to those who could not join the company, the poor, &c. (Esther ix. 19, 22): see G. B. Gray on Num. xxii. 40. The word rendered 'portions' means perhaps 'choice bits': see on Esther ii. 9.

**the joy of the LORD** (= Yahweh): objective genitive, 'the joy you have or take in Yahweh.' See Ps. ix. 3, xxxii. 11.

**your strength:** Heb. 'your safe retreat,' 'refuge,' not, as in the R.Vm., 'stronghold,' though the Massorites so explained the word.

**11. Hold your peace:** i. e. Do not weep aloud (see ver. 9)

day is holy; neither be ye grieved. And all the people 12
went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions,
and to make great mirth, because they had understood the
words that were declared unto them.

And on the second day were gathered together the 13
heads of fathers' *houses* of all the people, the priests,
and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to give attention
to the words of the law. And they found written in 14

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**the day is holy:** i. e. set apart for Yahweh; whatever has to do with Him should give joy.

**12. portions:** see on ver. 10.

13–18. *Celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, as prescribed by the newly found law.*

It is the month Tishri (see on ver. 1). The law book had been made known. In this month the Feast of Tabernacles fell (15 to 21 or to 22), and the newly instructed people, led by their specially instructed leaders, set about the keeping of this festival. It is now the second day, and thirteen days more must come and go before 'the Feast' (see on ver. 18) will begin. The tenth day of the month is that prescribed in the Priestly Code for what became the most solemn fast of the Jewish code (see Exod. xxix. 36, xxx. 10; Lev. xxiii. 27 f., xxv. 9). Yet nothing is said about this fast, the Day of Atonement, proof enough surely that the laws enacting it formed no part of Ezra's *torah.*

**13. heads of fathers' *houses* . . . priests and the Levites:** Ezra now instructs an inner circle in his law as he had previously the whole congregation. His purpose would be to supply the leaders with information about points too recondite for the multitude, and also perhaps to give directions as to the carrying out of the law.

**heads of fathers' houses:** see on Ezra ii. 59.

**even:** omit with the versions (LXX, *Luc.*, Syr., Vulg.).

**to give attention to:** better, 'that he might give the sense of the (different) parts of the law.' The Heb. verb here is cognate with the noun rendered 'sense' in ver. 8, and means often to 'teach,' as in ix. 20, Ps. xxxii. 8, &c., i. e. 'to give the sense of.'

**the words of:** the Heb. term denotes 'things' as well as 'words,' and is often used as here in the sense of details, minutiae (see Jer. v. 21; Ps. lxv. 4, cxxxvii. 2, cxlv. 5). Ezra had to explain to this select company the detailed points and especially the hard ones of the law.

**14.** The laws concerning the Feast of Tabernacles occur in all the principal Hexateuch codes in different forms corresponding to

the law, how that the LORD had commanded by Moses,
that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the
15 feast of the seventh month: and that they should publish
and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying,
Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and
branches of wild olive, and myrtle branches, and palm
branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths,
16 as it is written. So the people went forth, and brought
them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the

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different stages of belief and practice (see Exod. xxiii. 16 (JE); Deut. xvi. 13, 16; Lev. xxiii. 39–43 (H); and Lev. xxiii. 34–36 (P); Ezek. xlv. 25). The statements in verses 14–18 of the present chapter show that the writer had before him the third of the above sections alone (Lev. xxiii. 39–43) which belongs to the Holiness Code (Lev. xvii–xxvi). Moreover the words given as written in the law differ in detail from those of the section used, showing that small importance was attached to the mere words of the law.

**by Moses**: cf. ver 1 ('the law of Moses'). The very old tradition as to the Mosaic origin of the law and the later one as to the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch is so far correct that Moses must have laid down the general lines of a legal code which continued to be modified and expanded down to the fourth century B.C.: see p. 10 f.

**that the children of Israel should dwell in booths**: nowhere else in the O.T. is this prescribed except in Lev. xxiii. 42.

**15. that they should publish**: cf. Lev. xxiii. 1, 4.

**the mount**: here as often = the mountain land, i. e. Judah.

**fetch olive branches . . . to make booths**: there is nothing in Lev. xxiii saying that the branches, &c., to be gathered were to be used in constructing booths, though (so Keil, Dillmann, &c.) that may be intended. All that is commanded is that the people were to take the fruit of goodly trees, 'branches of palm trees, boughs of thick trees (= myrtles according to tradition), and willows of the brook' (Lev. xxiii. 40). With these they were to keep the feast (ver. 41). Then it is said they were to dwell in booths, without any hint as to how these were to be made. Perhaps (so Kuenen) the branches, &c., in ver. 40 were to be used also in forming the bundles (*lulabs*) of four kinds (myrtles, &c.) which, since early times, have been brandished during the feast in the synagogues. Of this latter custom the Bible gives no explicit account, though it may be implied in the above verse of Leviticus.

**as it is written**: see on ver. 14.

roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts
of the house of God, and in the broad place of the water
gate, and in the broad place of the gate of Ephraim. And 17
all the congregation of them that were come again out of
the captivity made booths, and dwelt in the booths: for
since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day
had not the children of Israel done so. And there was

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**16. the roof of his house:** flat in Palestine and much used as places of resort of evenings (see 2 Sam. xi. 2; Dan. iv. 26), and for even sleeping on in summer. During the feast the Jews still take their meals in the booths as far as weather, means, &c., permit.

**courts:** most Palestine houses have open courts with wells of water on which the inmates depend for their supply.

**the broad place of the water gate:** see on iii. 26, and on Ezra x. 9.

**the gate of Ephraim:** see on iii. 6 and xii. 39; cf. 2 Kings xiv. 13; 2 Chron. xxv. 23. It was a little to the south-west of the corner, and (according to G. A. Smith) south of the line of wall repaired under Nehemiah.

**17. all the congregation of them,** &c.: render according to the Heb., 'All the congregation, (even) those who returned,' &c. The word in brackets is inserted to make the sense clear, but in Heb. the whole congregation is equated with those who returned. The unexiled Jews whom the returned exiles found in the homeland were relatively so few and unimportant as to be ignored. See on Ezra vi. 21.

**since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun,** &c.: yet we read in Ezra iii. 4 of a celebration of the feast almost immediately after the arrival of Zerubbabel. There are several ways of reconciling what upon the surface and without prejudice looks like a contradiction. J. D. Mich., Klost., and Sieg. omit **the son of Nun,** identifying this Jeshua then with the well-known high-priest who shared in the observance of Ezra iii. 4. All the versions, however, have these words, and moreover the whole clause seems based on 2 Kings xxiii. 22. Jeshua bin-Nun was the inaugurator of a new era just as was Jeshua the companion of Zerubbabel, and was not unlikely to be mentioned.

Others (Bertheau, &c.) lay great stress on the word **so,** taking the clause to mean that in *such a manner* the Israelites had not observed this feast from the time of Jeshua bin-Nun. The present writer thinks that the Heb. words 'had not done so' mean simply 'had not kept the Feast, had not done what had been described'—the celebration of this Feast. It is better to see in the two ac-

18 very great gladness. Also day by day, from the first day
unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God.
And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day
was a [a] solemn assembly, according unto the ordinance.
9 Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the

[a] Or, *closing festival*

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counts two different and conflicting traditions handed down along different channels. The writer of either of these passages had evidently not seen the other passage. Differences and even contradictions like these make the record of facts and traditions in Ezra-Nehemiah the more valuable and trustworthy.

**gladness:** see Lev. xxiii. 40.

**18. seven days**: so Lev. xxiii. 39; Deut. xvi. 13, 15.

**a solemn assembly:** this is no part of the Feast proper, as the words of this verse imply and as is shown by Num. xxix. 35 (P), where the sacrifices for the day bear no proportion to those offered daily during the seven days of Tabernacles. See G. B. Gray, *Numbers*, 402 ff. ('A scale of public offerings'). This eighth day is mentioned in Lev. xxiii. 34, 39 (P not H); Num. xxix. 35 (late P), but not in Deut. (see xvi. 13-15, xxxi. 9-12), nor in JE. See 1 Kings viii. 65 f. (where the older law is implied) and 2 Chron. vii. 8-10 (which follows P). Opinion is divided as to whether the last great day of the Feast of John vii. 37 is the last (i. e. the seventh day) of the Feast proper or the eighth day, the solemn assembly. But there can be no doubt that it is the seventh day that is meant.

## IX.

The contents of this chapter follow quite naturally upon those of that which precedes. When the people through the reading of the law come to a perception of the wide divergence between their lives and the acknowledged standard one might expect to see the demonstrations of grief described in ch. ix. It is of course assumed that the mourning and weeping of viii. 9-11 and of the present chapter are on account of the mixed marriages which the reading of the law had painted in the darkest colours. During the feasts of the seventh month the mourning people are commended to rejoice in accordance with the custom and requirements of the festival times (viii. 9 ff.). But the feast of the month is past and gone (Tabernacles) and the mourning is resumed two days later (see ver. 1).

1-5. *Day of public confession.*

**1. the twenty and fourth day** (of Tishri): this would be two days after the Feast of Tabernacles had come to a close. This verse shows that chaps. viii and ix are inseparably connected.

children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackcloth, and earth upon them. And the seed of Israel 2 separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers. And they stood up in their place, and read in the book 3 of the law of the LORD their God a fourth part of the

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This day is not (with Siegfried) to be identified with the Day of Atonement (see Lev. xvi, xxii. 27–32; Num. xx. 7 ff.), which in later times was observed on the tenth day of the month, but which in Ezra's time was unknown.

**fasting:** see Ezra viii. 21, x. 6.

**sackcloth:** a sign of penitent sorrow (see 1 Chron. xxi. 16; Jonah iii. 5, 8; Dan. ix. 3): see on Esther iv. 1.

**earth upon them:** see 1 Sam. iv. 12; 2 Sam. i. 2, xv. 32; Job ii. 12.

**2. the seed:** a comparison with Ezra ix. 2 suggests common authorship. In favour of authorship by Ezra is also the fact that the word is found most frequently in writing about the time of the exile (see Isa. xlv. 25; cf. ver. 19; Jer. xxxi. 36, &c.).

**separated themselves:** i. e. for the united act of confession and prayer. Keil and others think that a general separation from the heathen is meant.

**strangers,** i.e. non-Jews: another Heb. word (*gēr*), generally translated 'sojourners,' means non-Jews who have settled in Jewish territory and adopted largely, and in late times wholly, the religion of the Jews. Notwithstanding what is recorded in Ezra ix f. it seems evident that non-Jews joined Jews in the religious assemblies of the latter: see on Ezra iii. 3, x. 2, and article 'Stranger' in *SDB*.

**the iniquities of their fathers:** see remarks on verses 7–31.

**3. they stood up in their place:** render, 'they arose (so the Heb.) and went to their place,' i. e. the place appointed for them (see on viii. 7).

**and read:** who? Not the people, though the Heb. allows this. We have here an example of the unnamed ('indefinite) subject' so common in Hebrew which is better rendered into English by the passive, as it is the action and not the agent that is in question: see p. 103. Here the Levites must be understood as the readers (see viii. 3–8).

**book of the law,** &c.: see on viii. 1; cf. verses 4, 5, 7 of the present chapter and x. 29, 34.

**a fourth part of the day:** i. e. three hours, probably from about 9 a.m. to 12 noon, the other three hours following immediately upon this. The whole assembly must have stood throughout the six hours, except when they prostrated themselves, but see below

day; and *another* fourth part they confessed, and wor-
4 shipped the LORD their God. Then stood up upon the
stairs of the Levites, Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, She-
baniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani, and cried
with a loud voice unto the LORD their God. Then the
5 Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Shere-
biah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, said, Stand up
and bless the LORD your God from everlasting to ever-
lasting: and [a] blessed be thy glorious name, which is

[a] Or, *let them bless*

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**confessed:** see on Ezra x. 2.

**worshipped:** lit. 'prostrated themselves.' The verb comes, however, to be used in a general way for 'to worship', whatever the attitude.

4 f. The two lists in these two verses are no doubt one at bottom, the confusion arising through the carelessness and ignorance of copyists. Four of the names occur twice (Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Sherebiah). Siegfried, Torrey, &c., say that the Chronicler is responsible for introducing these names. If so, one wonders that he did not do his work better—unless his list has suffered from transmission. The LXX diverges from the Hebrew considerably in these lists (see below). It seems evident that the names stand for houses, not individuals (cf. Jeshua), and we are to think of each house as represented by its living chief.

**4. stairs** (of the Levites): Heb. 'high place.' It is the wooden platform of viii. 3 that must be meant.

**Bani:** the double occurrence of this name in ver. 4 shows how inaccurate the traditional text here is. We should probably read in one case 'Binnu' (see x. 9, xii. 8). The LXX translates Bani, Binnui, and Bunni as if all were *benē* (= sons of), so reducing the number from eight to five.

**5. Stand:** lit., 'arise.' The word denotes perhaps merely a summons to do what follows (see on Ezra x. 4), though it may bear its literal meaning; see on ver. 3 ('worshipped').

**bless,** &c.: these words resemble closely Psalms which have come down to us (see Ps. xl. 1, 14, lxxii. 19, cvi. 48, and the references below). See further on verses 6–37.

**blessed be thy glorious name:** this rendering is preferable to that of the margin (see on ver. 3 (indefinite subject)).

6–37. *Ezra's confession and prayer on behalf of the people.* Have we in this a veritable psalm of Ezra's time and by Ezra himself? Or is it the work of the Chronicler as Torrey and others hold?

exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou art the LORD, 6 even thou alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas and all that is in them, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth

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Unless there is cogent evidence to the contrary we ought to accept the *prima facie* evidence of the narrative. It is remarkable that although this song makes abundant use of other parts of the O. T. there is hardly a single case in which it can be proved that a source so late as the Chronicler, or even as the Priestly Code, has been consulted (see the notes below). If Ezra or Nehemiah or a contemporary is not the author it is perfectly clear that the Chronicler is not, for his manner does not show itself from beginning to end. The writer is most of all influenced by the Deuteronomist, and this agrees with a time between the dominance of the D and P codes, see p. 18 f. The references given below to parallel passages will be chiefly to parts of the O. T. which this Psalmist seems to have had in mind.

**6.** Invocation.

We ought, with the LXX, to begin this verse with 'And Ezra said.' This is supported by a comparison with Ezra ix. 6-15. Under the priestly influence of a later time these words might well have been omitted, since to lead in prayer and confession is the prerogative of the priest alone in the P code (see Lev. xxi. 21).

**Thou . . . LORD . . . alone:** cf. Ps. lxxx. 18 and Isa. xliv. 6.

**thou hast made:** not created, as in Gen. i. 1, ii. 1.

**heaven** (and) **the heaven of heavens:** the copula 'and' must with all the versions be inserted (see Deut. x. 14). The expression 'heaven of heavens' is a Hebrew superlative, and is equivalent to 'the highest heaven.' The idea of a plurality of heavens underlies the expression, either three (see 2 Chron. xii. 12) or seven (as in the Talmud).

**preservest:** lit. 'keepest alive.'

**7-31.** *A rapid survey of the nation's past; its sins and its mercies.* With this survey compare Pss. lxxviii (pre-exilic or exilic), cvi, and also Pss. cv, cxl, cxli, though the three last speak only about God's goodness to Israel at the various stages of the nation's history, nothing in them being said of the nation's sins. This section has for background, as Pss. lxxviii and cvi, a period of national distress—they may all be the product of the same set of events. Here at all events the producing circumstances seem to be the opposition offered to the restoration of Judaism and its institutions and the galling feelings inseparable from bondage to an alien power.

This Psalm and that in Ezra ix. 6-15 have as much in common

7 thee. Thou art [a] the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the
8 Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; and foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite,

[a] Or, *O LORD*

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as common authorship justifies us in expecting, but the differences are sufficient to prove that they were uttered on different occasions.

To the modern mind it seems passing strange to find in this Psalm, in Ezra ix. 6-15, and in many Psalms in the Psalter, one generation of men apologizing to God for the sins of their forefathers who lived hundreds of years before, and seeking Divine pardon for these sins. But to the people of these times there is no incongruity in all this, for the individual was lost in the nation, and whatever merit or demerit attached to the latter belonged as well to the separate members of the nation. We have a modification of the same thought (the solidarity of the race) in the old doctrine of original sin.

7 f. *God's covenant with Abraham, and through him with the nation.*

**7. who didst choose Abram:** in Deut. vii. 8 and x. 15 God is said to choose Israel because He loved their ancestors. In the present passage God is said to choose Abram.

**Ur of the Chaldees:** see Gen. xv. 7 (E); cf. Gen. xi. 25, 31.

**gavest him the name of Abraham:** see Gen. xvii. 5 (P; J must also have had this).

**8.** (found his heart) **faithful**, i. e. believing (see Gen. xv. 6 (JE); cf. Ps. xxviii. 8; 1 Sam. iii. 20; Gal. iii. 9).

**madest a covenant with him:** see Gen. xv. 18-21 (JE) and cf. Gen. xvii. 2 ff. (P).

**the Canaanite,** &c.: this list is abridged from Gen. xv. 19-21 (JE) or from Deut. vii. 1. On Canaanite and Amorite see on Ezra ix. 1. Amorites and Canaanites represent the two most important ethnic elements in the pre-Israelitish population of Palestine, and originally no other native races seemed to have been mentioned, but later writers swelled the list for didactic purposes, magnifying the conquest which God enabled the nation to achieve. If the literal meaning of such lists is pressed it must be admitted that the longest of them (1 Gen. xv. 19-21) is very incomplete, as it embraces only tribes west of the Jordan and south of the upper reaches of that river.

**Hittite:** very important remains of the civilization of this people have been found in recent years in Asia Minor and elsewhere, proving that at one time they were numerous and powerful enough

and the Girgashite, even to give it unto his seed, and
hast performed thy words; for thou art righteous. And 9
thou sawest the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and
heardest their cry by the Red Sea; and shewedst signs 10
and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and
on all the people of his land; for thou knewest that they
dealt proudly against them; and didst get thee a name,
as it is this day. And thou didst divide the sea before 11
them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on
the dry land; and their pursuers thou didst cast into the
depths, as a stone into the mighty waters. Moreover 12
thou leddest them in a pillar of cloud by day; and in a
pillar of fire by night, to give them light in the way
wherein they should go. Thou camest down also upon 13
mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and

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to contest the supremacy of Western Asia with Assyria: see A. H. Sayce, *The Hittites*.

**Jebusite:** G. A. Smith denies that there ever was a city called Jebus (=Jerusalem, or a part of it): the existence of a city of that name being inferred from the tribal name.

**for thou art righteous:** because thou hast kept Thy promise (see Deut. xxxii. 4).

9-11. *In Egypt and the deliverance out of it.* The long interval between Abraham and the settlement in Egypt is passed over in silence.

**9. thou sawest,** &c.: see Exod. iii. 7 (J). Cf. Exod. xiv. 10 (J); xv. 4.

**10. and shewedst signs:** see Deut. vi. 22.

**dealt proudly:** see Exod. xviii. 11 (J), xvi. 14 (E); Deut. i. 43, xvii. 13.

**didst get thee a name:** see Exod. ix. 16 (J); cf. Isa. lxiii. 12; Jer. xxxii. 20. **as it is this day:** see Jer. xliv. 2.

**11. thou didst divide,** &c.: see Exod. xv. 4 (J).

12-21. *In the wilderness.*

**12. pillar of cloud . . . pillar of fire:** see ver. 19 and Exod. xiii. 2 f. (J); Num. xiv. 14 (JE); Deut. i. 33; cf. Ps. lxxviii. 14, cv. 39.

**13.** See Exod. xix. 18, 20.

**Sinai** (J, P) and Horeb (E, D) are simply different names in different sources for the same mountain. The old view is that Horeb was the name of the group or range and Sinai that of one

gavest them right judgements and true laws, good statutes
14 and commandments: and madest known unto them thy
holy sabbath, and commandedst them commandments,

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of the mountains in it; but biblical usage is against any distinction being made.

**judgements:** better 'ordinances': see on i. 7.

**true laws:** Heb. 'laws of faithfulness,' i. e. laws in harmony with God's revealed purpose to do good to His people: not capricious, much less inimical. We are not sharply to differentiate the terms grouped in this verse for the Divine legislation; they stand rather for different aspects of the same thing, just as in Ps. cxix (see Introd. to, *Century Bible*) the Divine word is expressed in each stanza by eight terms indicative of as many view-points.

**14. holy sabbath:** the epithet 'holy' seems to imply that this institution was now regarded as a religious one (see below). We have in this verse what is probably the earliest post-exilic reference to the Sabbath—the allusions in Ezekiel (xx. 12, 20, &c.) belonging to the exile itself. In pre-exilic times the references seem to show that the Sabbath was a rest day for man and for beast, a day for relaxation and recreation, and not directly intended for worship or religious work: see Exod. xxiii. 12 (JE), xxxiv. 21 (J); Deut. v. 12–15; Amos viii. 4; Hos. ii. 11. It was during the exile, when the great feasts could not be kept owing to separation from the Temple, that the Sabbath came to be set apart as a day for the studying of the Scripture and for sacred song and prayer. The above is, however, an *a priori* conclusion, but it is almost certainly in accordance with the facts. After the return, when the Sabbath does loom into view, it is, as here, a 'holy' day; yet for some time after the return, and in some circles during the exile, this day does not seem to have commanded much, if any, notice. It is not once spoken of in Isaiah, not even in the second part, except in passages assigned to the time of Nehemiah (lvi. 2, lviii. 13 f.). There is not a word about it in Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, Psalms, Proverbs, or Job, or even Genesis, except in the account of its institution, which is late (P). Ezra recognizes its claims in the present passage, though in no other extant words of his, and Nehemiah made its observance a matter of great consequence: see Neh. xiii. 13–21, with which must go Isa. lviii. 13 f. and Jer. xvii. 19–21, as of the same period and even movement.

In the P code and connected parts of the O. T. the Sabbath is a religious institution (see Exod. xxxi. 12–17 (P); Num. xxviii. 9 f.). It is quite clear that the Israelitish Sabbath is not a replica of the Babylonian *Šabattu*, if even the two had at all any genitic connexion. The Babylonian institution was a religious one from

and statutes, and a law, by the hand of Moses thy servant:
and gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and 15
broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their
thirst, and commandedst them that they should go in to
possess the land which thou hadst lifted up thine hand
to give them. But they and our fathers dealt proudly, 16
and hardened their neck, and hearkened not to thy commandments, and refused to obey, neither were mindful 17

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the first; the Sabbath became that only after the exile—a proof that the influence of Babylon was exerted, if at all, in post-exilic times only. The Babylonian term *Šabattu* was applied to the fifteenth of the month only, and was identical, at least originally, with the Full Moon Festival[1]. The 7th, 14th, 19th, 21st and 28th days of the month in the Babylonian calendar were unlucky days (*ukhulgal*) for certain acts, not rest or sacred days at all[1]. See Meinhold, *Sabbat und Woche*, 1905; A. R. Gordan, *The Early Traditions of Genesis*, 216 ff., 1907, and review by the present writer in *Review of Theology and Philosophy*, vol. iii, p. 689 ff.

**commandments**: see on ver. 13 and cf. i. 7 and Ezra vii. 11 for similar combinations of synonyms.

**15. bread from heaven**: see Exod. xvi. 4 (JE); cf. Ps. cv. 40. In Ps. lxxviii. 25 it is called (in a corrected text) 'the bread of angels': see on ver. 20 ('manna'). As regards the hunger and thirst of the people see Deut. xxviii. 48.

**go in to possess**: see Deut. ix. 5.

**lifted up thine hand**: i. e. (as in A.V.) 'sworn,' here an anthropomorphism, for the idiom (common in many languages) rests on the custom still widely prevalent (as in Scotland) of pointing to Deity as witness when an oath is taken: see Exod. vi. 8, &c.; Num. xiv. 28 f., 33. For the existence of the practice in Africa see Johnstone, *Journal Anthrop. Institute*, xxxii, p. 264.

**16.** (they) **and** (our fathers): render **'even'**; it is the explicative conjunction *waw*, corresponding to a similar use of the Greek *καί* and the Latin *et*.

**dealt proudly**: see on ver. 10.

**hardened their neck**: as animals refusing to bear the yoke: see verses 17, 29 and Deut. x. 16; Jer. vii. 26. Cf. Exod. xxxii. 9.

**17. refused to obey**: see Jer. iv. 6. Note the heaped-up charges in this verse.

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[1] See Pinches, *PSBA.*, 1904, 51 ff.; Zimmern, *KAT.*$^{(3)}$, 592; *ZDMG.*, 1904, 200 ff., 458 ff.; Benzinger, *Arch.*$^{(2)}$, 338 ff.; C. H. W. Johns, *Expositor*, 1906, ii. 433; Driver, *Genesis*, 34 f.

of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened
their neck, [a] and in their rebellion appointed a captain to
return to their bondage: but thou art [b] a God ready to
pardon, gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger,
18 and plenteous in mercy, and forsookest them not. Yea,
when they had made them a molten calf, and said, This
is thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had
19 wrought great provocations; yet thou in thy manifold
mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar
of cloud departed not from over them by day, to lead
them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to
shew them light, and the way wherein they should go.
20 Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and

[a] The Sept. has, *and appointed a captain to return to their bondage in Egypt.* See Num. xiv. 4. [b] Heb. *a God of forgivenesses.*

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**wonders:** Heb. 'outstanding acts,' used especially for what God did for His people, whether in nature or in history; see Exod. iii. 20 (J), &c. The word is very common in the Psalms, but, though common also in JE, it is absent from P.

**and in their rebellion,** &c.: render (see R.Vm.), 'and appointed a head (or leader), so that (under his leadership) they might return to their bondage in Egypt.' No change in the text is necessary for the above translation except a trivial one on a single Hebrew word.

**appointed a captain** (lit., 'a head'): so the Greek versions (though different Greek words are used in *Luc.* and LXX). Haupt, following an Assyrian idiom, renders 'they made head,' i.e. 'they resisted.' This, however, is not Hebrew. Bertheau and Stade render 'they turned their head' ('to return,' &c.).

**their bondage**: see on Ezra ix. 9.

**a God ready to pardon:** cf. Dan. ix. 9, which seems to depend on the present passage as being the older.

For the epithets applied in this verse to God see reference Bibles.

**18.** See Exod. xxxii. 4 (E), 8 (JE).

**wrought great provocations:** the Hebrew means 'they exhibited great contempt' (for God). The noun occurs besides only in ver. 26 and in Ezek. xxxv. 12.

**19. to shew them light, and the way:** render (omitting with the versions 'and'), 'to show them light in the way,' &c.

**20. thy good spirit:** see Num. xi. 17, 23-29 (E); cf. Ps. cxliii. 10; Isa. lxi. 11.

withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. Yea, forty years didst thou 21 sustain them in the wilderness, *and* they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not. Moreover thou gavest them kingdoms and peoples, [a] which 22 thou didst allot after their portions: so they possessed the land of Sihon, even the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan. Their children also 23 multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them into the land, concerning which thou didst say to

[a] Or, *and didst distribute them into* every *corner*

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**manna:** see on ver. 15. What is here said of the supply of manna and water has its source in Num. xi. 6–9 (JE), not as ver. 15 in Exod. xvi. 4 (JE): see Ps. lxxviii. 17 ff., where the same two sources seem combined. Exod. xvi. 25 gives a popular etymology of the word manna ('what is it'), which Semitic philology shows to be incorrect. The manna of Scripture is generally identified with those thick drops which in May and June exude of nights from the tamarisk tree through punctures caused by insects. They are gathered by the Bedouin Arabs of the Sinaitic Peninsula and greatly relished. Another view is that a kind of stone lichen largely eaten by Arabs is the original manna. In any case here, as in Exod. xvi, Num. xi, Ps. lxxviii. 24, and John vi. 31, manna is regarded as due to a special act on God's part, and something in the circumstances under which the wilderness manna was supplied may have made the supply really miraculous.

**21.** See Deut. ii. 7, viii. 4, xxix. 4.

(their feet) **swelled not:** rendered 'blistered not' (through walking).

22–25. *The Conquest of Canaan.*

**22. after their portions:** Heb., 'according to a corner' (Lev. xix. 17, 27), or 'according to a portion' ('corner') of territory (only in Num. xxiv. 17, and then doubtfully). Better with LXX, Vulg. omit the clause: it is perhaps a dittograph of the last part of the preceding words. *Luc.* and Syr. give quite different renderings from each other and from that of the E.VV.

**possessed:** see Deut. i. 21.

**even the land of:** omit (with LXX, Vulg.); it is an obvious dittograph, the same word written twice by mistake. The obviousness of this is seen in the Hebrew only.

**23.** See Gen. xxii. 17 (JE); Deut. i. 10.

24 their fathers, that they should go in to possess it. So the
children went in and possessed the land, and thou subduedst
before them the inhabitants of the land, the
Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their
kings, and the peoples of the land, that they might do
25 with them as they would. And they took fenced cities,
and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all good
things, cisterns hewn out, vineyards, and oliveyards,
and fruit trees in abundance: so they did eat, and were
filled, and became fat, and delighted themselves in thy
26 great goodness. Nevertheless they were disobedient, and
rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their back,
and slew thy prophets which testified against them to
turn them again unto thee, and they wrought great pro-
27 vocations. Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand

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**24.** Begin this verse with **and thou subduedst,** &c., the preceding words (absent from the LXX) anticipating unnecessarily what follows.

**thou subduedst . . . the Canaanites.** There is a word-play in the Hebrew which in English is lost, the noun and verb having the same root letters, as if in English one said 'he subjected the subjects' (of the German Emperor).

**25.** See Deut. vi. 10 f., viii. 7-9.

**became fat** (i. e. sensuous): see Deut. xxxii. 15.

26-29. *Period of the Judges.*

**26. they were disobedient:** the Hebrew verb (= to be refractory) is quite common in Deuteronomy (see ix. 7, 24, &c.).

**cast thy law behind their back:** see 1 Kings xiv. 9; Ezek. xxiii. 35.

**slew thy prophets:** see 1 Kings xviii. 4, 13, xix. 10; 2 Chron. xxiv. 20 f.; Matt. v. 12, xxiii. 29 ff.; Luke xi. 47, xiii. 33 ff.; Acts vii. 32; 1 Thess. ii. 15; Heb. xi. 32 f.

**which testified,** &c.: a favourite expression of D and his school (see Deut. iv. 26, &c.); never found in P or his circle (Chronicles, &c.).

**provocations:** see on ver. 18.

27 f. Here we have the recurring pragmatism of Judges—sins, repentance, deliverance—repeated in that order (see Judges ii. 11 ff.).

of their adversaries, who distressed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours who saved them out of the hand of their adversaries. But after they had 28
rest, they did evil again before thee: therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them: yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardest from heaven; and many times didst thou deliver them according to thy mercies; and testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring 29
them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgements, (which if a man do, he shall live in them,) and [a]withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear. Yet many years didst thou 30
bear with them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit

[a] Heb. *they gave a stubborn shoulder.*

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**27. adversaries . . . distressed . . . trouble:** the Hebrew basis in all these words is identical, so that the Hebrew exhibits a play on words which in a translation is missed; cf. 'adversaries . . . treated adversely . . . adverse (circumstances).'

**saviours:** the Hebrew word (the root of which is found in 'Joshua,' or 'Jesus') stands here for the judges, as in Judges iii. 9, 15, &c.; cf. Judges ii. 16 for the corresponding verb ('delivered').

**28. when they returned and cried:** render (in accordance with Heb. idiom), 'when they again cried.'

**29. commandments . . . judgements:** see on i. 7.

30 f. *Period of the prophets.*

**30. didst thou bear with them:** render, 'didst thou continue to be kind to them.' The Hebrew verb = 'to draw out,' 'to extend,' and with the noun denoting 'kindness' understood, means as above. We have the full phrase in Ps. xxxvi. 10 and cix. 12, and in Jer. xxxi. 3.

**testifiedst:** see on ver. 26.

**by thy spirit:** see Zech. vii. 12 and cf. 2 Chron. xxiv. 19 f., xxxvi. 28; 2 Pet. i. 21.

through thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: there-
fore gavest thou them into the hand of the peoples of the
1 lands. Nevertheless in thy manifold mercies thou didst
not make a full end of them, nor forsake them; for thou
2 art a gracious and merciful God. Now therefore, our
God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who
keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the travail seem
little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our kings,
on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets,
and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the time
3 of the kings of Assyria unto this day. Howbeit thou
art just in all that is come upon us; for thou hast dealt
4 truly, but we have done wickedly: neither have our kings,
our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law,

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**hand:** often in the O. T. = 'power.'

**peoples of the lands:** see on Ezra iv. 4, ix. 1.

**31. thou:** the Greek versions seem to have followed a text in which the Hebrew pronoun is for emphasis separately expressed as well as implied in the verb: 'thou, (even) thou didst not make.' Guthe and Bertholet adopt this.

**didst not make a full end:** see Jer. iv. 27, v. 10, 18; Ezek. xi. 13, xx. 17.

32–37. *Prayer that God may avert the punishment which the nation so richly deserves.*

**32. our God, the great,** &c.: see on i. 5.

**travail:** the Hebrew word has in it especially the idea of weariness: see Exod. xviii. 8, &c.

**princes:** see on Ezra ix. 1. The Hebrew word here is that used by Ezra, not that common in Nehemiah (see on Neh. ii. 16).

**since the time of the kings of Assyria:** see on Ezra ix. 7 and cf. 2 Kings xv. 29, xvii. 23.

**33. just:** see on Ezra ix. 15. Note the ethical standard by which God and man are equally judged. The blame for Israel's suffering is on Israel, not on God. Whence came so lofty a conception of Deity to this simple people?

(hast dealt) **truly:** 'faithfully' would better convey the sense of the Hebrew. God has not departed from the word He has spoken

**34. kept** (lit. 'done') **thy law:** the Hebrew expression occurs here only.

nor hearkened unto thy commandments and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them. For 35
they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works. Behold, we are servants 36
this day, and as for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it. And it yieldeth much in- 37
crease unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have power over our bodies, and

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**nor hearkened,** &c.: a Deuteronomic expression: see Deut. xxxii. 16; 2 Kings xvii. 5.

**thy testimonies,** &c.: render, 'thy solemn admonitions wherewith thou didst solemnly admonish them.' The Hebrew noun denotes strictly 'a warning given in the presence of witnesses.' It is one of the eight synonyms for 'the word of God' in Ps. cxix (see Introd. to in *Century Bible*). The phrase found here occurs besides in the Psalms and almost exclusively in Deuteronomy.

**35. they:** in Hebrew this pronoun is emphatic, the reference being to the kings and princes in contradistinction to the 'thou' and 'we' of ver. 33.

**in their kingdom:** i. e. in the time when they had an independent kingdom in contrast to the state of things now prevailing, see ver. 36.

**goodness:** see ver. 25.

**wicked works:** see Zech. i. 4.

**36. servants:** the same Hebrew word is rendered 'bondmen' in Ezra ix. 9 (see on).

**the land,** &c.: they are now servants in the land which God gave to them and in which, if they had served God, they would have been still masters.

**37. it yieldeth much increase** in the way of taxation to the Persian kingdom. The Hebrew noun (= 'increase') denotes often 'land produce' (Lev. xxv. 22, &c.).

(unto) **the kings:** Ezra and Nehemiah had both been commissioned by one of them to return to their native home to restore Jewish religious institutions.

**because of our sins:** our subjection to others is but the fruit of our refusing to subject ourselves to Thy will.

**our bodies** = 'our persons' (according to Semitic usage). If over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great

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we do not pay our taxes they can compel us to pay off our debt in service (agricultural, military).

**our cattle :** 'or they will distrain upon our cattle.'

**at their pleasure :** Oriental taxation is very much what the ruler or tax-collector wishes it to be.

The prayer ends abruptly in the M.T., and it seems quite evident that in the original draft there was a petition that God might deliver them out of their present distress, or at least some suitable ending. We should not, however, be too confident in imposing modern literary canons on ancient literature.

IX. 38-X. There has been much discussion as to the position of chapter x (including always the last verse of the preceding chapter) in the Book of Nehemiah. Of late years the majority of recognized O.T. scholars agree that Neh. vii. $73^b$–x belongs to the history of Ezra and his work, and ought to have been added to the book called 'Ezra' or incorporated into it. So Ewald, Wellhausen, Schrader, Klostermann, Baudissin, Budde, Ryssel, Bertholet. But there has been an inclination on the part of some scholars to separate ch. x and vii. $73^b$–ix, as is done by Kosters (who claims that the events of ch. x followed those of ch. xiii), by Winckler, and by Bertholet (who, ascribing vii. $73^b$-ix to the Ezra memoirs, holds that ch. x belongs to the Nehemiah memoirs). The principal reasons put forward by Bertholet for his view are these[1] :—

1. Ch. ix does not come to a complete end, so that in any case there is a break in the connexion of events (see on ix. 37).

2. In viii. 1–ix. 5 it is the third person that is used (leaving out of account the prayer in ix. 6–37, which is—Bertholet thinks—no original part of the section (but why not ?)). In ch. x, on the contrary, the first person reappears. It may be said in reply that in viii–ix. 5 we have a narrative of Ezra's doings, in which the third person is very suitably employed ; whereas in ch. x we have a verbatim copy of the obligation entered into. Moreover, we find the first person in ix. 32–37, which cannot be so lightly set aside as an interpolation as is done by this writer.

3. At the head of the signatories in x. 1 ff. is the name of Nehemiah, whereas Ezra is not mentioned from the beginning of that chapter to its close.

But most scholars, including Bertholet, admit that the name Nehemiah is a late insertion in viii. 9, and there is very good reason for so regarding it in x. 1. Following his name is that of Zedekiah, of whom we know nothing at all unless he was the king of that name.

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[1] See *Commentary*, p. 75 f.

It is, moreover, likely that the names in x. 2-9 stand for houses and not for persons, each house being represented by its head, who signed as such. The house to which Nehemiah belonged would be in Jerusalem, and there is no difficulty in conceiving of its chief, or at least the principal member, in Jerusalem in the later days of Ezra, signing on behalf of the house (clan). If this view be correct Ezra would not need separate mention, as he would be included in 'Seraiah' (see x. 2).

Some of the grounds on which Kosters places x after xiii are these[1]:

1. x. 32-39 implies xiii. 10-13. This, of course, is a question of probability only, and to the present writer the contrary seems the likelier supposition. Kosters assumes that the arrangements for the support of Levites and priests mentioned in x. 37 ff. must, if once made, have continued in operation even during Nehemiah's absence. In that case the withholding of the tithe from the Levites must have caused loss to the priests as well, since they were allotted one-tenth of the Levites' tithe (x. 37 ff.). But the Levites alone complain, not the priests (xiii. 10). It must, however, be borne in mind that our narrative is defective, and what one desiderates in cases like this might have formed part of a fuller history which is largely lost. Then again, the priests after the exile grew in numbers and in power very rapidly, the Levites losing in influence and popularity. It is not at all unlikely that the priests, after the events of ch. x, took matters into their own hands, received the tithes payable in the first instance to the Levites, and refused to let the latter have what was necessary for their maintenance.

See further on ch. xiii. 1-3, &c.

2. Kosters maintains further that the reference to the Sabbath in xiii. 15-22 is older than that in x. 32. Could the desecration of the Sabbath implied in the former passage have taken place after the stringent undertaking in x. 33? Would not Nehemiah have referred to the solemn, signed covenant? All this is *a priori* reasoning and depends for its cogency very much upon the individual to whom it is addressed. We know that the covenant to separate from strange wives was violated several times, yet we have no record that in each case the violated covenant is cited.

Kosters refers to other parts of ch. x in which ch. xiii is presupposed (see below notes on the two chapters).

In favour of connecting ch. x immediately with the preceding one are the following considerations, though the present writer recognizes that on neither side of the controversy is the evidence very decisive :—

1. The use of the first person plural in both chapters (see ix. 32 ff., and x, cf. verses 29, &c.).

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[1] See *Wiederherstellung*, 64 ff.

38 distress. [a] And [b] yet for all this we make a [c] sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, our Levites, *and* our priests, [d] seal unto it.

[a] [Ch. x. 1 in Heb.] [b] Or, *because of* [c] Or, *faithful*
[d] Heb. *are at the sealing.*

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2. One might expect the reading of the law and the confession and prayer which followed to lead to an attempt at the reorganization of the society and a restoration of its laws and institutions. The series of laws and regulations mentioned in ch. x are such as would be likely now to come into existence. The references to such laws in ch. xiii are sporadic, and seem due to their neglect during the absence of Nehemiah. Ch. x contains a programme for the future, and one sees in this a natural fitness. The solemn undertaking of x. 29 accords well with the deep earnestness which pervades ix. 6 ff.

3. The arrangement in xiii. 1 ff. to separate from Ammonites and Moabites is more likely to have been subsequent to the putting away of strange wives, this last being the first and chief concern of the returned community.

ix. 38–x. 27. *The signatories to the covenant.*

ix. **38.** This verse belongs (as in the M. T., not so in Luther's Bible as Ryle inaccurately says) to ch. x. It is with this verse that the section concerning the signing of the covenant opens.

**yet for all this:** render, 'on account of all this.' The reference in this must be to a lost paragraph, which recited the causes and terms of the covenant. There is nothing in the foregoing confession and prayer to supply a starting-point for this verse.

**sure covenant:** the Heb. word (= 'something firm') occurs only here and in xi. 23, and is cognate to the adjective (= firm) transliterated 'Amen' (see on v. 13). Though the ordinary word used for covenant (see ix. 8) does not occur here, the verb technically used for making a covenant (= 'to cut,' as in Greek, Latin, &c., on account of the ratification by sacrifice, see Gen. xv) is found here, showing that some kind of covenant is meant, though there can be no certainty on the matter. Perhaps the regular word for covenant (*berit*) is avoided, as it almost invariably describes what God does, and not, as here and xl. 23, what man undertakes to do.

**write it; and our princes,** &c.: render (to end of verse), 'and our princes, our Levites (and) our priests wrote their names to what was sealed.' The only change in the Hebrew is the omission of one consonant (= 'and') which has been written twice by mistake, or it may have been accidentally omitted before 'our priests' (see rendering above).

The E.VV. make no sense of this verse.

The princes, &c., attached their names to the covenant, which was afterwards sealed and put safely away in a jar or other

Now those that sealed were, Nehemiah the Tirshatha, 1
the son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah; Seraiah, Azariah, 2
Jeremiah; Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah; Hattush, She- 3,
baniah, Malluch; Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah; Daniel, 5,
Ginnethon, Baruch; Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin; 7
Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah: these were the priests. And 8,

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receptacle. Babylonian contracts upon clay tablets have been found at Nippur[1] and at other places, enclosed in clay sealed envelopes, on the outside of which was a duplicate of the contract to be consulted when necessary, the sealed and signed contract to be consulted only in cases of emergency (see Jer. xxxii. 11). On sealing = signing in the Orient, see on Esther iii. 10.

x. 1. **those that sealed:** render, 'on what was (afterwards) sealed were (the following names) Nehemiah,' &c. If, with the Hebrew, we read the plural 'things' sealed, we must understand that the signers attached their names to the original covenant and its duplicate (see on ix. 38).

The names of those who signed are arranged in classes. It is to be borne in mind that in these lists we have names of the houses the representatives of which signed the document, not the names of individuals.

**Nehemiah the Tirshatha . . . Zedekiah:** the list is headed by the signatories of Nehemiah's house (i.e. the house to which belonged the Nehemiah soon to play a great part) and the royal house of Zedekiah. So interpreted the words need cause no difficulty. Many futile attempts to identify this Zedekiah have been made. Probably, however, this part of ver. 2 is a late interpolation, due to a desire to introduce those two great names. Nehemiah's official title is *pekhah* (= governor), not *Tirshatha* (see on viii. 9 and Ezra ii. 67).

2–8. *Priestly houses.* This list has twenty-one names as against twenty-two in xii. 1–3. Moreover, sixteen names are identical in both lists. We read in Ezra ii. (36–39) of only four priestly houses as having returned with Zerubbabel. But the number and influence of the priests grew rapidly and continuously after the exile.

**2. Seraiah:** Ezra belonged to this house, so that his name is really included in the list.

9–13. *Levitical houses.* Seventeen are mentioned as against two in Ezra ii. 40 (see on). Levites increased, as did priests, after the return, though they gradually came to be more and more the subordinates of the priests (see xii. 8).

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[1] Peters, *Nippur*, ii. 198.

the Levites : namely, Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui
10 of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel; and their brethren,
11 Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan; Mica,
13 Rehob, Hashabiah; Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah; Ho-
14 diah, Bani, Beninu. The chiefs of the people: Parosh,
15 Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani; Bunni, Azgad, Bebai;
18 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin; Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur; Hodiah,
20 Hashum, Bezai; Hariph, Anathoth, [a]Nobai; Magpiash,
22 Meshullam, Hezir; Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua; Pelatiah,
24 Hanan, Anaiah; Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub; Hallo-
25 hesh, Pilha, Shobek; Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah;
27 and Ahiah, Hanan, Anan; Malluch, Harim, Baanah.
28 And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinim, and all they that had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands unto

[a] Another reading is, *Nebai*.

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**9. namely :** the one Heb. consonant (*waw*) so translated must (with the versions and some thirty Heb. MSS.) be omitted.

14–27. *Lay houses.* Forty-one are named, twenty-one of them (verses 15–21) occurring almost completely in Ezra ii (and Neh. vii). Of the rest (verses 22–27) some are mentioned in ch. iii.

28 f. *The individual members of the houses associate themselves with their representatives, endorsing their action.* It is individuals that are now indicated by priests, Levites, &c., the houses having been previously so named.

**28. porters ... singers ... Nethinim :** named as distinct from the Levites (see vii. 43 ff., Ezra ii. 40 ff.). To the Chronicler all are equally Levites (see 1 Chron. xxiii. 3–5, &c.). So Smend, Baudissin, &c., against Torrey[1], who denies the usage described above, not on inadequate grounds as the present writer thinks.

**Nethinim :** see on Ezra ii. 43.

**all they that had separated themselves,** i. e. such as had not lived in Babylon, home-staying Jews who had complied with the new law (see on Ezra vi. 21). Meyer[2] holds that proselytes, non-Jewish converts to Judaism from the heathen around, are meant, but Ezra's and Nehemiah's principles left no room in Judaism for such converts.

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[1] *Composition*, &c., p. 22 f.

[2] *Die Entstehung*, &c., p. 129.

the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one that had knowledge and understanding; they 29 clave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and his judgements and his statutes; and that we would not give 30 our daughters unto the peoples of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons: and if the peoples of the 31 land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy of them on the sabbath, or

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**peoples of the lands:** see on Ezra iii. 3.

**wives . . . sons . . . daughters:** see on viii. 2.

**29. nobles,** lit. 'powerful ones,' the word in iii. 5 (see on) not that so rendered in ii. 16 (see on). Here the word stands for the persons who signed the sealed covenant on behalf of the houses they represented.

**entered into a curse:** the same noun (accompanied by the causative form of the verb here) is translated 'oath' in Ezek. xvii. 13, and in fact means both ('he brought him under,' i.e. into 'an oath'), the oath being one of imprecation, which amounts to a curse. The use of a following word meaning distinctly 'oath' shows that it is the imprecatory side of the first noun that is here in view. On the present occasion there must have been some ceremony performed during which the terms of the curse would be recited. The belief in these times was that an uttered curse executed itself by its own inherent energy (see art. 'Magic' (by the present writer), *Encyc. Brit.*, col. $289^b$, and also art. 'Blessings and Curses,' col. 591 f.).

**God's law:** see on viii. 1.

**commandments . . . judgements . . . statutes:** see on i. 7.

30-39. *The obligations which the people take upon themselves.*

**30. that we would not give our daughters,** &c.: there is no explicit prohibition of mixed marriages in the P code, so that the law here cited must be that of Exod. xxxiv. 16 (J) and Deut. vii. 3.

**the peoples of the land:** see on Ezra iii. 3.

**31.** The law of the Sabbath here is much likelier to be prior to that of xiii. 15-22 than (as Kosters holds) the reverse. The fact that this law was broken is no proof that it did not exist. Moreover xiii. 15 ff. goes beyond the present undertaking, in that it for-

on a holy day: and that we would forgo the [a] seventh year,
32 and the [b] exaction of every debt. Also we made ordinances
for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a
33 shekel for the service of the house of our God; for the
shewbread, and for the continual meal offering, and for

[a] See Exod. xxiii. 10, 11. [b] See Deut. xv. 1, 2.

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bids the bringing into Jerusalem on the Sabbath of wares to be sold, even if no Jews bought them.

**a holy day:** any one of the festivals.

**that we would forgo the seventh year:** the technical words in this verse show that the reference is to Exod. xxiii. 10 f. (JE) and not at all to the late law in Lev. xxv. 2-7, another proof of early date.

**the exaction of every debt:** referring to Deut. xv. 1-3, which enacts that every seventh year (beginning at any time) debts should be remitted (so Steuernagel, Bertholet), or (as Dillmann and Driver? hold) suspended until the year was past. It is important to remember that among the Jews loans were made to poor people as acts of charity (see on v. 1-5).

32 f. *A tax of one-third of a shekel for the upkeep of the Temple services.* The words **we made ordinances,** &c., show that this is a new arrangement, replacing, it is probable, a voluntary and therefore uncertain payment. There is no prior law on the subject. Exod. xxx. 13 (late P) belongs to a much later time, and, moreover, the half-shekel poll-tax there is merely an *ad hoc* arrangement according to Bertholet, and not a law for the future. But against this last view may be adduced 2 Chron. xxiv. 4 f.; Matt. xvii. 24, 27; and Josephus, *Wars*, vii. 6, 6.

Assuming that Exod. xxx. 13 imposes a poll-tax of half a shekel, this shows, what is otherwise abundantly proved, the growth of priestly influence and privilege.

Benzinger[1] gives figures to show that one-third of the shekel of the present verse (Babylonian, Persian) has the same value as one half the shekel of Exod. xxx. 13 (Phoenician, Maccabean), so that in that case there is no contradiction.

**33.** In this verse the separate uses to which the tax thus imposed was to be put are enumerated.

**shewbread:** lit., 'bread set in rows' (see Lev. xxiv. 5 f. (P); cf. 1 Chron. ix. 32, xxiii. 29). In Exod. xxv. 30 (P) it is called 'bread of the face' or 'presence,' because exposed before Deity, and 'holy bread' in 1 Sam. xxi. 4. The table of shewbread was originally an altar, the bread on it being the offering. Sayce, Fried. Delitzsch, the continual burnt offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God. And we 34

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[1] *Heb. Archäologie*$^{(2)}$, p. 200 f.

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Haupt and, hesitatingly, Zimmern[1] say that such table-like altars with unleavened cakes on them existed in Babylonian temples.

**continual** (= 'daily') **burnt offering:** see on Ezra iii. 3, ix. 4. The custom implied here—that of presenting a meat and meal offering in the morning and evening respectively—is that which prevailed immediately before the exile (see p. 9).

**of the Sabbaths . . . new moons . . . set feasts:** the continual, i. e. daily, sacrifices were to be made on feast days as if they were ordinary days, but additions had to be made in each case according to a scale given in detail in Num. xxviii f.

The **set feasts** are given in detail in Num. xxviii. 16–xxix. 38, though the laws of Num. xxviii f. may represent later developments of the kindred laws of Nehemiah's time. We have no means of deciding this or the contrary.

**the holy things:** a general term for sacrifices. In 2 Chron. xxix. 33 the word is used specifically of 'thank offerings,' and in 2 Chron. xxxv. 13 of sacrifices offered on the days following the Passover. Bertholet says the word stands here for the compensation (wrongly called peace) offerings, but the above passages cited by him do not prove that, nor does anything else.

**sin offerings:** so called because intended to secure forgiveness for sin committed. The earliest reference to these is in Ezek. xlv. 17. It formed in later times a part of the regular burnt offering, being presented at New Moon and other festivals: see Num. xxviii. 15 ff., xxix; cf. Lev. xvi. 21.

**to make atonement** means lit. to 'cover,' i. e. God's eyes, so that He may not see and therefore punish sin; so the Arabic cognate verb. 1 Sam. xii. 3 makes this explanation very plausible, the word there rendered 'ransom' being the noun cognate with the verb 'to cover (my eyes).' Some derive the word from a verb = 'to obliterate,' 'wipe out' (cf. the Assyrian): see Lev. iv. 10 and Bertholet's long note on Lev. i. 4.

**and for all the work:** referring back to the beginning of the verse, not to the immediately preceding words.

In **all the work** we have a summing up of what has been mentioned in this verse.

**the work:** see iii. 22; Ezra vi. 9, vii. 20–22.

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[1] *KAT.*⁽³⁾, p. 600 (including note 3).

cast lots, the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood offering, to bring it into the house of our God, according to our fathers' houses, at times appointed, year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, as
35 it is written in the law: and to bring the firstfruits of our ground, and the firstfruits of all fruit of all manner

**34. we cast lots:** see xi. 1; 1 Chron. xxv. 13 f. The lot was cast not merely to prevent dispute, but also because Deity was supposed thus to express His will.

**the priests, the Levites:** the regular Deuteronomic phrase (see Deut. xviii. 1). Perhaps, however, we should here (with all the ancient versions) read 'the priests and the Levites.'

**for the wood offering:** better, 'for the bringing of the wood': see xiii. 31.

**at times appointed:** see xiii. 31 and Ezra x. 14. According to Rabbinical tradition wood was brought nine times a year[1]; but Josephus, *Wars*, ii. 17, 6, seems to show that this was done on the 14th of Ab (July–August), which came hence to be called 'the feast of the wood offering' or of 'the bringing of wood.'

**as it is written:** no law of the kind can be traced in the Pentateuch or anywhere else in the O.T. Perhaps the reference is to some law then existing, and classed with other laws of supposed Mosaic origin. But we have here clear proof that Ezra's law was not our Pentateuch. Rawlinson refers to Lev. vi. 12, which has, however, to do with the *burning* not the *bringing* of wood for the altar.

**35. firstfruits** (of our ground): see Exod. xxiii. 19, xxxiv. 26 (JE); cf. Deut. xviii. 4, xxvi. 2 ff. In ver. 37 a different Hebrew word (*rā'sheet*) is so translated; here the Heb. word is *bikkurim.* Do the two words connote two different things? Gesenius, Wellhausen[2], Bertholet, &c., answer in the affirmative, holding that *bikkurim* = 'first-ripe fruit' as the E.VV. render it in Nahum iii. 12 and Num. xviii. 13; the etymology supports this (the same root lies in the Hebrew word for 'firstborn,' *bekōr*). The other Hebrew word (*rā'sheet*) means elsewhere often 'the best,' 'choicest' (see Prov. iii. 9; Deut. xxxiii. 21) and it may denote this in ver. 37 and kindred passages.

Many, however, hold that whatever difference the two words originally had, in actual usage they are synonymous: so

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[1] *Taanit*, iv. 5, 8. See Schürer, ii. 1. 252 (Germ.$^{(4)}$ ii. 260).

[2] *Proleg.*$^{(3)}$ 165.

of trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD: also 36
the firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is
written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of
our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the
priests that minister in the house of our God: and that 37
we should bring the firstfruits of our [a] dough, and our

[a] Or, *coarse meal*

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Dillmann[1], G. B. Gray[2], and of older commentators, Clericus and Hupfeld.

In later times the word *bikkurim* came to be applied to the firstfruits of the 'seven kinds' of trees enumerated in Deut. viii. 8, the word *rā'shēēt* being used in reference to other products of the ground[3].

In each case only a portion of the firstfruits was offered to Yahweh, as is made clear in Deut. xxvi. 2 ff. by the use of the partitive *min*.

The practice of offering to Deity the first products of the soil, common among many ancient peoples[4], could not have arisen among the Hebrews until they had exchanged a pastoral for an agricultural life. Probably they took over the practice from the Canaanites.

**36. the firstborn of our sons:** see Exod. xxii. 29, on which the present prescription seems to rest. Taking these two passages by themselves one might infer that firstborn boys, as firstborn male animals, had to be sacrificed, and perhaps the words had at the first this meaning, for there are several traces of the practice of human sacrifice in the O.T.; cf. the case of Isaac (Gen. xxii. 1 ff.) and that of Jephthah's daughter (Judges xi. 34 ff.). But we are here no doubt to assume the operation of the law of redemption recorded in Exod. xiii. 13, xxxiv. 20 (J); cf. Num. xviii. 16 (P).

**cattle:** explained more fully below.

**as it is written:** the reference is to what follows; see below.

**firstlings of our herds . . . flocks:** no passages seem to suit for bases except Num. xviii. 15–18, which in its present setting at least is later than our passage. According to this unclean animals were to be redeemed (ver. 15), clean ones to be sacrificed (ver. 17).

**37. firstfruits:** Heb. *rā'shēēt*; see on ver. 35.

**dough:** so the LXX; but the exact sense of the Hebrew word, found only here and Num. xv. 21 (see Gray on), is very heave offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, [a] the

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[1] On Exod. xxiii. 19. [2] On Num. xviii. 13.

[3] Schürer ⁽⁴⁾, ii. 249 (Eng. II. i. 137 f.).

[4] Robertson Smith (*Rel. Sem.*⁽²⁾, 241).

[a] Or, *the vintage*

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uncertain. Apparently some kind of cereal food is meant, of which part of the first made had to be presented to Yahweh. Perhaps oaten or wheaten porridge is meant.

**heave offerings:** a very inaccurate and misleading translation, for the offerings meant were not 'heaved.' The word means simply 'a gift' or 'contribution,' and the cognate verb = 'to give.' Driver on Deut. xii. 6, in *DB.* iii. 588 and on Mal. iii. 8 (*Century Bible*) suggests 'contributions,' lit. 'what is lifted from a larger quantity,' and so given.

The word is used in P of contributions (money, spoils, &c.) for sacred purposes (see Exod. xxv. 2 f., xxx. 13–15; Num. xxxi. 29, 41). In Ezra it stands for the donations made to the Temple, and in Ezek. (xlv. 1, 6, &c.) it is used of the land reserved for priests and Levites; see further Lev. vii. 32–34. What specifically the word connotes here and in xii. 44 is not quite clear, but the present writer is inclined to think that it is a general term for what follows; see on ver. 39.

37$^b$–38. *Tithes.* The sacred tithe is not known in the older codes, Deut. xiv. 22–27 and xxvi. 15 being the earliest biblical law enacting it, Num. xxv. 32 (P) is later, and Lev. xxvii. 30–33 later still. The present law differs from those in the above Deut. passages, see Ryle, *Com.*, p. 279.

Tithing as a principle of taxation prevailed to a large extent among ancient nations, Egyptians, Babylonians, &c.[1]

The arrangement in the present instance was as follows: The tithe of land produce (not here of the cattle as in Lev. xxvii. 32) was brought to the Levites, as yet living in country places, who received it in the presence of a priest who was to prevent any purloining. The Levites brought a tithe of this tithe (see Num. xviii. 25–28) to Jerusalem for the maintenance of the priests.

There is nothing about the payment of tithes in the older codes, but it is prescribed in the D and P codes, only that the law in each case differs, the later law favouring the priests in harmony with the growing power of the latter. In D (see Deut. xii. 17 f., xiv. 22–29, xxvi. 12) the tithe is levied on vegetable produce alone, and moreover in two years out of three it was devoted to the sacred festivals in which the offerer and his family shared at the central sanctuary (Deut. xiv. 22–29). In the third year it was to be stored up in the offerer's own city for the purpose of being distributed among the poor (Deut. xiv. 28 f., xxvi. 12). In both these cases the priests and others had part of the tithe thus offered.

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[1] See C. F. Kent, *Israel's Laws and Legal Proceedings*, p. 231 (note).

wine and the oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of
the house of our God; and the tithes of our ground
unto the Levites; for they, the Levites, take the tithes in
all the cities of our tillage. And the priest the son of 38
Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take
tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of
the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers,
into the treasure house. For the children of Israel and 39
the children of Levi shall bring the heave offering of the
corn, of [a] the wine, and of the oil, unto the chambers,
where are the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests
that minister, and the porters, and the singers: and we
will not forsake the house of our God.

[a] Or, *the vintage*.

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But the Priestly Code (see Lev. xxvii. 30-33; Num. xviii. 21-32) tithed cattle as well as vegetable produce (see Lev. xxvi. 32 f.), and this tithe went entirely to the Levites, who had to give one-tenth of what they received to the priests. In the present instance it will be seen that the D law is followed as regards what is tithed—vegetable produce alone; but in other respects the law in P is followed. Probably here and in xiii. 5 we are to recognize an intervening stage of custom between D and P.

**38. to the chambers, into the treasure house:** the latter (better rendered 'the place of the treasure') is simply an explanation of the former, **to the chambers** (or 'cells,' see on Ezra viii. 29) used to receive the tithe, &c., and also as dwellings for the priests.

**39. heave offering:** better 'contribution,' see on ver. 37. Here the term is general for firstfruits and tithes, as in Num. xviii. 24-28.

**vessels:** those used for holding the gifts in kind (tithe, &c.), not those spoken of in Ezra i. 7-11.

**we will not forsake the house of our God:** i. e. we will not neglect to pay our dues for the maintenance of the Temple officials and its services.

### Part II (of Nehemiah Proper).

With ch. xi the narrative interrupted by the Ezra section vii. $73^b$-x is resumed.

xi. 1 joins on immediately to vii. 4, though there is not sufficient reason to separate from the latter vii. 5-$73^a$.

The problem in vii. 4 is—how to fill the now well-defended

11 [N] And the princes of the people dwelt in Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts in
2 the *other* cities. And the people blessed all the men that willingly offered themselves to dwell in Jerusalem.

capital? The walls are completed, there is room for a large population, but how can it be secured?

xi. 1 f. is what remains of a fuller text. The very conjunction 'and' implies probably (though as good Hebraists know not necessarily, since the '*waw* consecutive' tense came often to be a tense simple[1]) connexion with a lost clause which perhaps told of a second assembly held after that of vii. 5. In this assembly it was not improbably decided that princes, now living almost wholly in the country for purposes of agriculture, should transfer themselves to the capital, and that a tenth of the able men in the country should be chosen by lot to settle in Jerusalem along with the princes. Perhaps the decision to replenish the general population in the way indicated was reached after the princes had settled in Jerusalem.

**1. princes:** see on Ezra ix. 1.

**the rest,** &c.: render, 'but the rest,' &c., omitting **also.**

**cast lots:** see on x. 34.

**one of ten,** &c.: Berth. and Rawl. give many instances of similar methods being used to repopulate ancient cities (Rome, &c.).

**the holy city:** see ver. 18; Isa. xlviii. 2; Joel iii. 17; Dan. ix. 16, 24; cf. the modern name of Jerusalem, *El-Quds* = the holy one. Jerusalem is never so called in Chronicles, suggesting that the passage is free from his influence.

**2. the men that willingly offered,** &c.: i. e. those who of their own accord and for the 'good of the cause' volunteered to make their homes in the capital. Keil, Siegfried, and others hold that by these words the persons elected by lot are meant, but it can hardly be said that they 'willingly offered.'

In xi. 3–xii. 26 we have lists which have sorely taxed the ingenuity of learned commentators. Many recent scholars hold that these lists are due to the prolific imagination of the Chronicler: so Wellhausen, Meyer, and Bertholet. It is strange, however, if that be so, that this Chronicler did not make a better show of consistency, for the lists in verses 3–19 and 1 Chron. ix. 2–17 go back, no doubt, to one original, though differing a good deal in details and also in their context. Of course these differences are due in part, and it may be wholly, to the copyists.

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[1] See on Ezra i. 1.

It is commonly assumed that as lists are frequently found in Chronicles, therefore the lists in Ezra and Nehemiah are also due to the Chronicler. But it seems to the present writer that the exile is a sufficient explanation of the large use made of genealogical registers after the return in 536 B.C. When the Southern Kingdom came to an end, and the flower of the nation was transported to Babylon, the national records, religious and political, would be removed to Babylon either by the Persian government or by the exiles themselves; see Introd. to Ezra ii. On their return such tables would be found of the greatest utility in the reconstitution and reorganization of the new community, and one need not be surprised that they are often referred to (Ezra ii; Neh. vii, x) and that others based on them were made.

To what period do the lists in xi. 3-36 belong? Three opinions have been defended.

1. The time before the exile. Smend[1] maintains that the country parts of Judah were occupied, as xi. 25 ff. implies, between the beginning of the exile (606) and the Maccabean age. A similar contention is made by Meyer, though in his case it is to argue from it to a late date for the list. In reply it is to be said that our knowledge of the period between Nehemiah and the Maccabees is far too slight to draw any dogmatic conclusions from it except within narrow limits. Moreover, there might well be a goodly number of Jewish families scattered about Judah for agricultural and pastoral purposes, all of them protected by the Persian government, and some of them perhaps descendants of Jews never removed to Babylon.

2. The time of Nehemiah: so the majority of commentators, including Keil, Ber.-Ryss., and Ryle.

No conclusive reasons have been given for rejecting this view, which is implied in the present arrangement of the Hebrew and English Bible, though the latter has in itself but little value. If we assume that these lists were put into the form implied in the greatly corrupted M.T. by or for Nehemiah, they have for basis the list (largely pre-exilic) in Ezra ii.

3. The time of the Chronicler. Wellhausen, Meyer, Bertholet, &c., hold that these lists are evidence of the state of things in the Chronicler's own time. They assume, of course, that this chapter is the Chronicler's own work, and, in fact, is based on 1 Chron. ix, and not the converse.

3-24 (except ver. 20). *Heads of Jewish and Benjamite families now resident in Jerusalem.* In vii (= Ezra ii) they represent clans or families.

In 1 Chron. ix. 3 mention is made in a general way of families belonging to Ephraim and Manasseh, though no names are given.

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[1] *Lehrbuch*[1] 340 n.

3 [$C_N$] [a] Now these are the chiefs of the province that dwelt in Jerusalem: but in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities, *to wit*, Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinim, and the children of
4 Solomon's servants. And in Jerusalem dwelt certain of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin. Of the children of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, of the children
5 of Perez; and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of the Shi-
6 lonite. All the sons of Perez that dwelt in Jerusalem were four hundred threescore and eight valiant men.

[a] See 1 Chron. ix. 2, &c.

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3-9. *Heads of lay families.*

3-6. *Judahites.*

**3. chiefs:** i.e. heads of houses (families). In 1 Chron. ix. 2 the word is by mistake 'first.' These had formerly lived on their country estate.

**province:** see on Ezra i, and cf. Neh. i. 3 f.

**but in the cities of Judah,** &c.: i.e. the bulk of those belonging to the Jewish community, lay and official, had their home in the provincial centres (cities, towns, and villages): see on Ezra x. 14.

**Israel:** i.e. laymen as distinguished from the Temple officials, priests, &c. See on Ezra x. 25.

**Nethinim:** see on Ezra ii. 43 ff.

**children of Solomon's servants:** see on Ezra ii. 58. They are absent from the list in 1 Chron. ix.

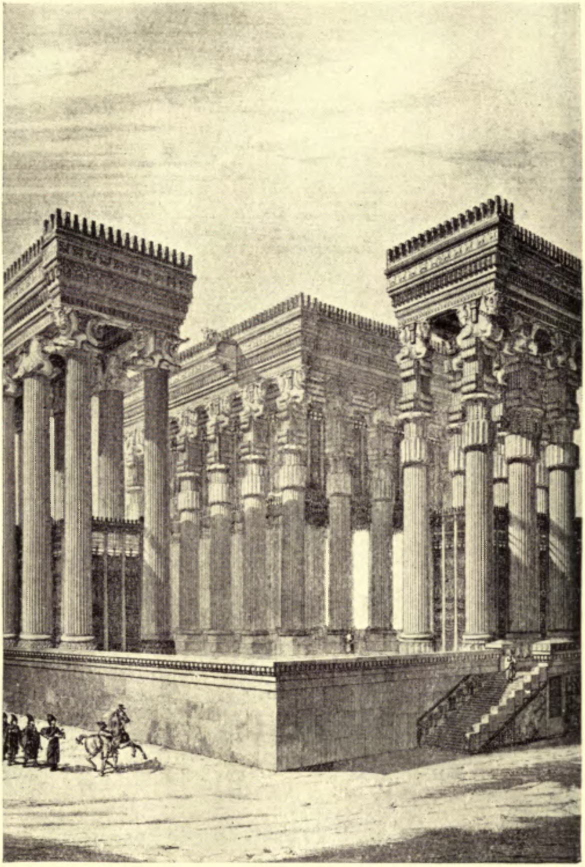
**4. Athaiah:** in 1 Chron. ix 'Uthai,' really one name. In Hebrew the resemblance in spelling is closer than in English.

**Perez:** see Gen. xxviii. 29.

**5. Col-hozeh:** see iii. 15.

**the son of the Shilonite:** read, 'the Shelanite,' from 'Shelah' (see Num. xxvi. 20). The word rendered 'son' (*ben*) means simply one of the class 'Shelanites.' It is Masseiah (1 Chron. ix, Asaiah) that is so called. 'Jeuel,' 'of the sons of Zerah' (Judah's third son), is added in 1 Chron. ix. 6.

**6. four hundred threescore and eight:** in 1 Chron. 'six hundred and ninety.'



HALL OF XERXES.

And these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of 7
Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah,
the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son
of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah. And after him Gabbai, 8
Sallai, nine hundred twenty and eight. And Joel the 9
son of Zichri was their overseer: and Judah the son
of Hassenuah was second over the city. Of the priests: 10
Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin, Seraiah the son of 11
Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the
son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of the house
of God, and their brethren that did the work of the house, 12

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**valiant men:** men able to engage in war.

7–9. *Benjamites.* In later times the tribe of Benjamin is lost in that of Judah: see on Ezra i. 5. The names in 1 Chron. differ considerably from those found here.

**8.** Read, 'And his clansmen (so *Luc.*, cf. verses 12, 13, 14) were mighty warriors, nine hundred and twenty-eight.' The changes in the Hebrew to produce the above are not great, **Gabbai, Sallai** being evidently a corruption of 'might warriors' (*Gibborē Khail*).

**9. overseer:** LXX *episcopos*, whence our 'bishop.' The Hebrew = 'one appointed over': so verses 14, 22; Esther ii. 3 (E.VV. 'officers').

10–24 (except 20). *Temple Officials.*

10–14. *Priests.*

**10.** For **son of Joiarib** read 'Joiarib'; so 1 Chron. ix. 10; cf. 1 Chron. xxiv. 7.

**11. Seraiah:** 1 Chron. ix. 11 'Azariah.' The designation 'ruler of the house of God' is attached to the latter name in 2 Chron. xxxi. 13; cf. 2 Kings xxv. 18. Probably an official of priestly standing charged with the general oversight of the Temple is intended.

**ruler of the house of God:** hardly the high-priest, as there were at the same time several officials so designated: see 2 Chron. xxxv. 8. If the high-priest is meant this 'Seraiah' might, as Bertheau suggests, be the ancestor of Ezra mentioned in Ezra vii. 1.

**12. and their brethren:** better, 'clansmen'.

**that did,** &c.: the words 'that did,' &c., describe the work of the priests mentioned in ver. 11 and their brother clansmen.

eight hundred twenty and two: and Adaiah the son of
Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son
of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah,
13 and his brethren, chiefs of fathers' *houses*, two hundred
forty and two: and Amashsai the son of Azarel, the son of
14 Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer, and
their brethren, mighty men of valour, an hundred twenty
and eight: and their overseer was Zabdiel, [a] the son of
15 Haggedolim. And of the Levites: Shemaiah the son
of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah,
16 the son of Bunni; and Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the
chiefs of the Levites, who had the oversight of the out-
17 ward business of the house of God; and Mattaniah the
son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, who
was the chief to begin the thanksgiving in prayer, and

[a] Or, *one of the great men*

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**13. Amashsai:** 1 Chron. ix. 12 'Maasai.'

**14. their** (brethren): read 'his' (with *Luc.* and LXX). 'Clansmen' is better than 'brethren.'

15–18. *Levites.*

**16. Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the chiefs of the Levites:** the Levites had evidently several overseers: see ver. 22.

**the outward business of the house:** cf. on ver. 22 and see 1 Chron. xxvi. 29. Here the phrase denotes duties other than those connected with the worship and ritual of the Temple building proper, such as carving for the fabric, procuring the necessary supplies of wood, animals, &c., for food, sacrifice, &c., accepting gifts to the Temple and safeguarding them (Ezra viii. 33).

**17. Zabdi:** read (with *Luc.*, LXX) 'Zikri.'

**the chief to begin:** render (changing one consonant into another almost exactly like it), 'the leader of the Psalm-singing': so *Luc.*, LXX, Vulg.

**the thanksgiving in prayer:** render, 'offered thanks' ('praised,' see on Ezra iii. 11 and x. 1) 'during prayer.'

This inclusion of musicians among the Levites, usual in Chronicles, is not met with in the original sources of Ezra-Nehemiah (see p. 61). We have the same inclusion of singers among the Levites in ver. 22, xii. 8, 27, and in Ezra iii. 7. These parts are perhaps from the hand of the Chronicler, or they may have been worked over by him.

Bakbukiah, the second among his brethren; and Abda the
son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun. All 18
the Levites in the holy city were two hundred fourscore
and four. Moreover the porters, Akkub, Talmon, and their 19
brethren, that kept watch at the gates, were an hundred
seventy and two. And the residue of Israel, of the priests, 20
the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his
inheritance. But the Nethinim dwelt in Ophel: and 21
Ziha and Gishpa were over the Nethinim. The overseer 22
also of the Levites at Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of
Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the
son of Mica, of the sons of Asaph, the singers, over the
business of the house of God. For there was a com- 23

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**Bakbukiah:** in 1 Chron. ix. 15 'Bakbakkar.'

**the second:** i. e. to Mathaniah.

**brethren:** better, 'clansmen.'

**Jeduthun:** named in the titles of Pss. xxxix, lxii, and lxxvii (see 1 Chron. xvi. 41). In 1 Chron. vi. 33–47, xv. 17, 19, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan are mentioned as the leading singers; but in 1 Chron. xvi. 41, xxv. 1 ff. Jeduthun takes the place of Ethan owing, it would appear, to a different tradition.

**18. the holy city:** see on xi. 1.

**19. the porters.** In the parallel passage (1 Chron. ix. 17 ff.) a long addition is made to the present verse, probably an interpolation.

**the porters:** see on Ezra ii. 43 ff.

**20.** This verse should immediately precede ver. 25, from which, probably by a copyist, it has been separated: see below.

21–24. *Notes concerning certain officials appointed by the king.*

**21. Nethinim:** see on Ezra ii. 43 ff.

**Ophel:** see on iii. 27.

**22. overseer**: see on ver. 16.

**of the sons of Asaph:** belonging to the guild of Asaphites. It cannot be proved that such a man as Asaph existed: see Psalms, vol. ii, p. 37 (*Century Bible*).

**over the business of the house of God:** i. e. over the liturgical services of the Temple. Uzzi's duties were therefore of a higher character than those of Shabbethai and Jozabad (ver. 16, see on).

**23.** The king saw to the regular support of the singers. See xii. 47, xiii. 5; Ezra vi. 8–10, vii. 20–24.

mandment from the king concerning them, and [a] a settled
24 provision for the singers, as every day required. And
Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the children of
Zerah the son of Judah, was at the king's hand in all
25 matters concerning the people. And for the villages,
with their fields, some of the children of Judah dwelt

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[a] Or, *a sure ordinance concerning*

**the king:** evidently Artaxerxes I: see ver. 24 and the above passages. This king took a special interest in the Temple service.

**a settled provision:** lit. 'something firm' (see on x. 1).

**24. Pethahiah** was evidently an official who acted between the king and the Jews, especially in matters affecting the psalmody of the house. **Zerah**: see on ver. 5.

**at the king's hand:** i. e. at the king's disposal to represent the king in the particular matters just spoken of. It does not mean that he was governor at Jerusalem, for we assume that Nehemiah held that position at the time under review.

This man's jurisdiction is often held (as by Siegfried) to extend to general Jewish affairs in Jerusalem, his superior residing at Samaria (Ezra iv. 8, 17). But it is exceedingly probable that Judah and Samaria were administered by separate governors: see on Ezra viii. 36.

20, 25-36. *Country parts of Judah outside Jerusalem inhabited by Jews.* See p. 254 (notes on verses 1 f. and on ver. 3).

We have here the same general divisions as in ver. 3 ff., viz. Judahites and Benjamites, laymen and Temple officials, only we seem to have but a torso of what was originally written. In these verses we have a list of the outlying places where the clans reside; in verses 3 f. of the heads of clans that settled in Jerusalem.

**20.** This verse forms a general introduction to verses 25-36, and belongs here.

**the residue of:** the same Hebrew word translated 'the rest of' in ver. 1. Here it means what remains when those settled in Jerusalem are taken from the Jewish community.

**Israel:** laymen; see on ver. 1.

25-30. *The Judahites.*

**25. And for the villages,** &c.: render, 'And as regards the estates with their fields,' &c. Ver. 20 tells us that those of the community that lived outside of Jerusalem dwelt on their several land properties ('possessions': E.VV. 'inheritance'). In ver. 25 the writer passes on to remark that as regards these estates and the adjoining lands 'some Judahites dwelt in,' &c. See Lev. xxv. 31 ('the houses of the wall-less villages shall be counted as belonging to the country fields,' &c.).

in Kiriath-arba and the [a] towns thereof, and in Dibon and
the [a] towns thereof, and in Jekabzeel and the villages
thereof; and in Jeshua, and in Moladah, and Beth-pelet; 26
and in Hazar-shual, and in Beer-sheba and the [a] towns 27
thereof; and in Ziklag, and in Meconah and in the 28
[a] towns thereof; and in En-rimmon, and in Zorah, and in 29
Jarmuth; Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, Lachish 30
and the fields thereof, Azekah and the [a] towns thereof.
So they encamped from Beer-sheba unto the valley of

[a] Heb. *daughters*.

---

**villages:** lit. 'enclosures': then abode. Here the word denotes in general the various settlements in Judah.

**Kiriath-arba:** according to Judges i. 10 the older name of Hebron: see Gen. xxiii. 2 (P); Joshua xiv. 15. But if this is the older name, why is it used here?

**and the towns thereof**: lit. 'and its daughters,' the regular phrase for 'and its dependent places' (cities, towns, or villages).

**Dibon . . . Jekabzeel:** usually identified with *Dimonah* and *Kabzeel* (Joshua xv. 21 f.).

**26. Jeshua:** nowhere else mentioned in the O. T.

**Moladah:** see Joshua xv. 26. Not yet identified.

**Beth-pelet:** see Num. x. 26; Joshua xv. 27. Hitherto not identified.

**Hazar-shual . . . Beersheba:** see Joshua xv. 28, &c. The latter is now called *Bîr es-Seba'a*.

**28. Ziklag:** see Joshua xv. 31; 1 Sam. xxx. i.

**Meconah:** named nowhere else in the O. T. Probably = the modern *Mekenna*, twelve miles north-west of *Beit Jibrin*.

**29. En-rimmon:** see Joshua xv. 32, xix. 7; 1 Chron. iv. 32, where in the LXX (best codd.) the same reading is implied. The M.T. of the passages cited assumes two places, 'Ain' ('En') and 'Rimmon.'

**Zorah:** see Joshua xv. 33. **Jarmuth:** see Joshua xv. 35.

**30. Zanoah:** see Joshua xv. 34 = the modern *Zanû'a*, two and a half miles south of Beth Shemesh.

**Adullam . . . Azekah:** see Joshua xv. 35.

**Lachish** (see Joshua xv. 39, &c., &c.) = the modern *Tell-el-Hesy* (or *Umm Lakis*?[1]). An important Amorite city.

**from Beer-sheba** (in the extreme south of the land) to the **valley of Hinnom** (in the extreme north of Judah).

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[1] So Robinson. But the modern *Umm Lakish* more probably occupies the site of a city founded by a colony from Lakish (= Lachish). Professor Sayce, however, tells me that *Umm Lakish* (which the natives now call *Laṭish*) is a Roman village.

31 Hinnom. The children of Benjamin also *dwelt* from
Geba *onward*, at Michmash and Aija, and at Beth-el and
32, 33 the [a] towns thereof; at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah; Hazor,
34, 35 Ramah, Gittaim; Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat; Lod, and
36 Ono, [b] the valley of craftsmen. And of the Levites,
certain courses in Judah *were joined* to Benjamin.

[a] Heb. *daughters.* [b] Or, *Gehaharashim* See 1 Chron. iv. 14.

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31-35. *The Benjamites.*

**31. from Geba onward:** read, 'at Geba,' changing one consonant.

**Geba:** see on Ezra ii. 26.

**Michmash:** see on Ezra ii. 27.

For **Aija** (= Ai) and **Bethel** see on Ezra ii. 28.

**32. Anathoth:** see on Ezra ii. 23.

**Nob:** a priest's city quite close to Jerusalem, but as yet unidentified: see 1 Sam. xxi. 1, xxii. 9, 11, 19, &c.

**Ananiah:** nowhere else referred to in the O.T. Commonly identified with *Beit Hannina,* a village two miles to the north of Jerusalem.

**33. Hazor:** probably = the modern *Khurbet Hassûr*, a little north of Jerusalem, quite close to the last-named place.

**Ramah:** see on Ezra ii. 26.

**Gittaim:** mentioned only here. Its exact position is unknown.

**34. Hadid:** see on Ezra ii. 33.

**Zeboim:** not identified and nowhere else named; but cf. 1 Sam. xiii. 18 ('the valley of Zeboim').

**Neballat** = the modern *Beit Nebâla*, about four miles north-east of Lydda. Nowhere else mentioned.

**35. Lod . . . Ono:** see on Ezra ii. 33.

**the valley of craftsmen:** on the road between Jerusalem and Jaffa: see 1 Chron. iv. 14, where the A.V. and R.V. treat the words as a proper name, *Ge-harashim.* The valley had its name probably from the large number of craftsmen who dwelt in it.

**36.** Render (with *Luc.*), 'And some of the Levites' (who did not live at Jerusalem) 'were in Judah and (some) in Benjamin': i.e. the non-Jerusalem Levites were distributed in Judah and Benjamin. The meaning of the M.T. is, 'some Levites who in former times had been attached to Judah, now had their homes in Benjamin.'

## XII. 1-26. VARIOUS LISTS OF PRIESTS AND LEVITES.

We have in this section a collection of separate lists which appear to have been kept in the Temple archives, and the placing of which here was suggested by the list in xi. 3 ff. Torrey is

[**T**$_R$] Now these are the priests and the Levites that **12**
went up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua:
Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra; Amariah, Malluch, Hattush; 2
Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth; Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah; 3, 4

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very sure that every word of ch. xii is by the Chronicler[1], but if so, it is quite inexplicable that he should set side by side lists which are obviously incomplete and even inconsistent. We have here lists which in an older form are old and original, but they have been edited and connecting passages inserted, probably by different hands and at different times. In verses 11 and 22 Jaddua, who flourished about 330 B.C., is mentioned, and in ver. 26 the time of Ezra and Nehemiah is looked back to as belonging to the distant past. These lists present many difficulties, chronological and otherwise. If Hashabiah and Sherebiah (ver. 24) were contemporaries of Joiakim, son of Jeshua, and also of Ezra (Ezra viii. 18 f., 24), then Ezra and Joiakim must have lived about the same time, which is exceedingly unlikely, for Jeshua's son could hardly have been high-priest in 458 B.C.

In verses 1-7 we have virtually the same names assigned to the time of Jeshua which verses 12-21 connect with Jeshua's son Joiakim, and which in x. 1 ff. are apparently referred to the time of Ezra. This, however, should not occasion any insuperable difficulty, for in each case the names of houses remain essentially unchanged, though the unnamed individuals who represented them would necessarily vary.

In verses 8 f., 24 f. the singers seem (though not by name) to be included among the Levites, as are the porters in ver. 25—a sign of late date (see p. 61 and on xi. 17).

1-9. *Priestly and Levitical houses at the time of the return under Zerubbabel and Jeshua.* The lists in these verses differ considerably from the corresponding lists in Ezra ii (= Neh. vii); perhaps because the reference is here to corresponding houses as they existed in Nehemiah's day.

1-7. *Priestly houses*: see x. 3-9, Ezra ii. 2.

**2. Malluch:** in ver. 14 'Malluchi.'

**Hattush:** not in ver. 12 ff.

**3. Shecaniah:** in ver. 14 'Shebaniah' through confusion of two similarly written letters. The first form occurs in 1 Chron. xxiv. 11 and in the Greek versions (LXX and *Luc.*) of ver. 14. But in x. 4 we have 'Shebaniah.'

**Rehum:** in ver. 15 'Harim,' which is more correct (see x. 6 and Ezra ii. 39). The consonants are identical in both cases, though differently arranged.

**4. Ginnethoi:** in ver. 16 'Ginnethon,' as in x. 3.

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[1] *Composition,* &c. p. 43.

5, 6 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah; Shemaiah, and Joiarib,
7 Jedaiah; Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These were
the chiefs of the priests and of their brethren in the
8 days of Jeshua. Moreover the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui,
Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, *and* Mattaniah, which was
9 over [a] the thanksgiving, he and his brethren. Also Bak-
bukiah and Unno, their brethren, were over against them
10 in wards. And Jeshua begat Joiakim, and Joiakim begat
11 Eliashib, and Eliashib begat Joiada, and Joiada begat
12 Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua. And in the days

[a] Or, *the choirs*

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**5. Mijamin:** in ver. 16 'Miniamin.'

**Maadiah:** in ver. 17 'Moadiah,' the correct form being probably as *Luc.* and x. 8 'Maaziah.'

**7. Sallu:** in ver. 20 'Sallai.'

8 f. *Levites*: see Ezra ii. 40-42.

**8. Binnui:** so x. 10; in viii. 7 and ix. 4 'Bani.'

**Kadmiel, Sherebiah:** see viii. 7, ix. 4, x. 10, 13.

**which was over the thanksgiving,** i. e. who had charge of the singing, the reference being to Mattaniah only (see xi. 17). The marginal reading 'the choirs' is an error based on the mistaken spelling of the Hebrew word.

**9. were over against them,** i. e. stood opposite to them and sang in turns with them, i. e. antiphonally (see ver. 24, 2 Chron. vii. 7, and cf. Psalms, vol. ii (*Century Bible*), pp. 26, 236, 245, 288).

**in wards:** render, 'in (their) watches' (see ver. 24, 1 Chron. xxvi. 16). The word denotes the 'bands' or 'courses' of Levites who in their turns functioned in the Temple.

10 f. *The high-priests.*

**10. Jeshua:** see on Ezra ii. 2.

**Joiakim:** it would seem (see verses 12, 26) that under his superintendence a register of priests and Levites was made.

**Eliashib** (see iii. 1 and on Ezra x. 6) and **Joiada** (see xiii. 28) were Nehemiah's contemporaries.

**11. Jonathan:** read 'John,' and see on ver. 22 and on Ezra x. 6.

**Jaddua:** no doubt the high-priest mentioned by Josephus as going to meet Alexander the Great to appease his wrath as the great conqueror was approaching Jerusalem [1]. Though the incident related by Josephus is unhistorical, it would appear to show that Jaddua lived about 334 B. C. (see on Ezra x. 6).

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[1] *Antiq.* xi. 7, 12 and 8, 4 f.

of Joiakim were priests, heads of fathers' *houses*: of
Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; of Ezra, 13
Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; of [a] Malluchi, Jona- 14
than; of Shebaniah, Joseph; of Harim, Adna; of 15
Meraioth, Helkai; of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, 16
Meshullam; of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, 17
Piltai; of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; 18
and of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; of Sallai, 19, 20
Kallai; of Amok, Eber; of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of 21
Jedaiah, Nethanel. The Levites in the days of Eliashib, 22
Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were recorded heads
of fathers' *houses*: also the priests, [b] in the reign of
Darius the Persian. The sons of Levi, heads of fathers' 23
*houses*, were written in the book of the chronicles, even

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[a] Another reading is, *Melicu*. [b] Or, *to*

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12-21. *Heads of priestly houses in the time of Joiakim* (*circa* 499-463 B. C.). For the differences in names see on verses 1-7.

**17. of Miniamin:** the name of the head of this house has fallen out. Read 'of Miniamin . . .'

22-26. *Heads of Levitical houses with sundry short notices.*

**22.** The text of this verse is obviously corrupt, but the sense is evidently, that during the high-priesthood of the four men named a register of heads of priestly and Levitical houses was kept. One might (making two very trivial textual changes) read, 'Of the Levites in the days of Eliashib . . . were recorded the heads of fathers' (houses) as also of the priests until the reign of,' &c.

**in the reign:** read, 'until the reign.' Guthe and Bertholet are wrong when they adduce the Greek and Latin version for this change (one letter only), for they have all (including *Luc.*, *en*) evidently followed the LXX, as does the Syr., showing that the corruption is old.

**Darius the Persian,** i. e. Darius Codomannus (336-331). His being called **the Persian** is often, since Ewald, held to suggest a date for this paragraph at least subsequent to the cessation of the Persian rule, though Winckler denies this: see p. 19 f., and on Ezra i. 1.

**23.** Render, 'Of the Levites the heads of,' &c.

**sons of Levi** = Levites. Cf. 'sons of Israel' = 'Israelites' (see on Ezra vi. 9).

**book of the chronicles:** lit. 'things of the days,' i. e. 'daily records,' the Hebrew name of our books of Chronicles. As the

24 until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib. And the chiefs of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brethren over against them, to praise and give thanks, according to the commandment
25 of David the man of God, ward against ward. Mattaniah,

---

expression is a common one for official records, one must not hastily conclude that the canonical books of Chronicles are here cited, though of course nothing in the words forbids that interpretation.

**until the days of Johanan:** this would seem to show that the records in question were completed during John's tenure of the office of high-priest, *circa* 380. The whole of the Persian period would seem to have been embraced in these records.

**son** (i. e. grandson) **of Eliashib:** see on Ezra v. 1, vii. 1-5, and viii. 2.

24 f. *Levitical chiefs.* Perhaps the names in these verses are from the 'annals' (chronicles) mentioned in ver. 23, for they extend to a later date than Joiakim's (v. 12).

**24. Jeshua the son of Kadmiel:** read (making very trivial changes which *Luc.* and LXX favour), 'Jeshua, Binnui, and Kadmiel' (see ver. 8 and x. 10). Jeshua was the son of Jozadak or Jehozadak (see Ezra iii. 2, 8).

**over against them:** see on ver. 1. Probably the responding parties in the antiphonal singing were arranged opposite each other.

**to praise:** the root of the verb occurs in 'Hallelujah,' lit. 'praise Yah.'

**and give thanks:** see on Ezra x. 1. Referring to the subject-matter, not the form of the singing.

**according to the commandment of David:** see 1 Chron. xvi. 4 ff., xxv, &c. The tradition of David as the great organizer of Temple music is fully developed in Chronicles (say 300 B. C.), but it must have taken time to grow and become a part of the national belief: see on Ezra iii. 10.

**the man of God:** see ver. 36 and 2 Chron. viii. 14; cf. the title to Ps. xviii. It is impossible to say for certain whether the present passage or that in Chronicles is the earlier, but one seems dependent on the other.

**ward against ward:** see on ver. 9. We are not told in Ezra-Nehemiah into how many courses David divided the priests and Levites, but according to Chronicles the number was twenty-four in each case (see 1 Chron. xxiv f.). We seem in the present book to have the tradition of David the musician in its earlier and simpler form.

**25.** xi. 17 shows that the three first names belong to the list

and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub,
were porters keeping the ward at the storehouses of the 26
gates. These were in the days of Joiakim the son of
Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah
the governor, and of Ezra the priest the scribe.

---

in ver. 24. The names of the **porters** ('gatekeepers,' see on Ezra ii. 42) begin with Meshullam.

**keeping the ward,** &c.: render, 'keeping watch over the storerooms at (i. e. near) the gates' (of the Temple area).

### 27–43. THE DEDICATION OF THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

The presence of the 'I' in verses 31, 38, 40 shows that we have to do here with the Nehemiah memoirs, though what Nehemiah wrote about the dedication has been worked over by later editors—the Chroniclers perhaps. The words 'they sought' in ver. 27 prove nothing however, though they are constantly quoted by even the latest critics to prove that the writer is not Nehemiah; 'the Levites were sought' is equally possible according to the Hebrew (see on Ezra x. 17).

Of course there are here many features, words, and expressions which abound in Chronicles, as in verses 35 f., 41, &c., but it is impossible to pronounce finally when these features arose in Hebrew literature.

In 'Chronicles' we have the close of or at least a late stage in a long course of evolution in Hebrew thought, usage, and style of language. We cannot separate ver. 30 from ver. 31, nor verses 37, 39 f. from ver. 38, so that verses 31 f., 37–40 can be proved to be by Nehemiah, and are accepted as such by Ryssel (in Kautzsch), Siegfried and Bertholet. Ewald [1] and Stade [2] are no doubt right in recognizing in verses 27–43 a genuine extract from the Nehemiah memoirs, though later editors have been at work on these verses.

The musical references in this chapter are commonly fathered on the Chronicler, but it is time to acknowledge that everything of the kind did not first come into existence in the time of the Chronicler. The fact that in his time they were in full career implies a previous period of development: see p. 16 f.

### DATE OF THE DEDICATION OF THE WALLS.

It is exceedingly likely that the walls were dedicated almost immediately after they were completed, as Stade [3], Bertholet, and most recent critics hold. But Rawlinson [4] and Klostermann [5] maintain

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[1] *Gesch.*$^{3}$ iv. 205, A 3. [2] *Gesch.* ii. 176. [3] *Gesch.* ii. 175.

[4] On xii. 27. [5] *Gesch.* 265 f.

27 [$C_N$] And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals,
28 psalteries, and with harps. And the sons of the singers

---

that the dedication took place some twelve years after their completion, i. e. after Nehemiah's second visit to Jerusalem in 432. The close connexion of verses 27–43 with the next chapter and the personal allusion in xiii. 6 are said to require this late date. Moreover, Nehemiah's return has been explained as due to his desire to have the king's approval for the ceremony of the dedication.

But one is allowed to deny the cogency of this reasoning, which is based mainly on subjective considerations. The walls were finished in vi. 16, and (removing vii. $73^b$–x to the close of Ezra) the intervening events do not require more than a few months. One may perhaps infer from 2 Macc. i. 18 that Nehemiah was at that time (say 80 B. C.) supposed to have dedicated the walls on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month (Kislew). Now according to Neh. vi. 15 the walls were completed on the twenty-fifth day of the sixth month (Elul). It is not unreasonable to think that exactly three months after their completion the walls were dedicated.

27–30. *Gathering of musicians.* The priests and Levites purify themselves, the people, and the city.

**27. dedication:** Heb. *khenuka*, a late word, non-occurrent in pre-exilic literature, though the cognate verb occurs in Deut. xx. 5, and in 1 Kings viii. 63. Cf. the proper name 'Enoch' (Heb. *Khănok* = dedicated ?) in Gen. iv. 17 f. (J), &c.: and see on Ezra vi. 16.

**they sought:** better use the passive, 'the Levites were sought,' &c. In Hebrew it is the impersonal construction (see p. 103).

By the **Levites** in this verse we are to understand one division only of them, viz. the singers (see p. 61).

**with gladness:** a rendering (supported by *Luc.*) involving a slight change in the text.

**thanksgivings** (see on Ezra iii. 11, x. 1) . . . **singing:** these two terms express respectively the theme and (lyrical) form of the words used. Pss. cxxii, cxlvii have been suggested.

**psalteries . . . harps:** better, 'harps . . . lyres' (see Psalms, vol. ii (*Century Bible*), p. 28). For the instruments named see 1 Chron. xiii. 8.

**28.** Render, 'And the Levites (so *Luc.*, Guthe, and ? Bertholet) and the singers gathered themselves together, from the plain of the Jordan and from round about Jerusalem,' &c.

**sons of the singers:** render, 'singers' (see on Ezra ii. 41).

gathered themselves together, both out of the [a] plain round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of the Netophathites; also from Beth-gilgal, and out of the fields 29
of Geba and Azmaveth: for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem. And the priests 30
and the Levites purified themselves; and they purified the people, and the gates, and the wall. Then I brought 31

[a] Or, *Circuit*

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In Hebrew the words rendered 'son' and 'sons' denote one or more of a specified class. Thus 'a son of man (*Adam*)' = 'a man,' 'sons of man' (or 'men') = 'men.' In Syriac 'son of man' is almost invariably used for 'man.'

These singers are identical with the Levites (see the rendering above and ver. 27).

**both:** the Heb. word (*waw*) is that usually translated 'and,' and should (with *Luc.*) be placed immediately before 'round about,' &c., as the sense requires (see rendering above).

**plain:** the Heb. word (*kikkar*, lit. 'circuit') is the technical term for the district around the lower Jordan. There is no difficulty here or in iii. 22 (see on) arising out of the distance, for the Jordan is only some twenty-two English miles from Jerusalem.

**Netophathites:** men from Netophah (see on Ezra ii. 22).

**29. Beth-gilgal:** nowhere else mentioned. Since *beth* (lit. 'house') means often 'place,' 'situation,' we are probably to understand 'the neighbourhood of Gilgal'; cf. **'fields'** (= 'open country') **'of Geba'** (see on Ezra ii. 26).

**Azmaveth**: see on Ezra ii. 24.

**30. the priests and the Levites:** the post-exilic usage; cf. 'the priests the Levites' in D.

**purified themselves:** by sprinkling on themselves sacrificial blood (see 2 Chron. xxix. 20–24; Ezek. xliii. 19; cf. Ezra vi. 10). Priests, Levites, people, gates, and wall had all to undergo the same ceremony of purification, as all were to be used in holy service. Of course it is ritual purification, that is meant, a conception brought out very prominently in Lev. xvii–xxvi (H) and Ezek. xl–xlviii.

31–43. *The procession around the walls.* The company of priests and Levites and princes formed themselves into two companies near the Valley Gate, one proceeding towards the right along the southern and eastern wall, the other to the left along the western and northern wall, the two companies meeting in an open space east of the Temple.

31–37. *Procession of the right-hand party.* Where was the up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great companies that gave thanks and went in pro-

general rendezvous whence the two bands started their circuit of the walls? We are not told, but the context makes it extremely likely that it was some point near the Valley Gate (see on ii. 13) as Stade surmised[1]. It was from this gate that Nehemiah commenced his tour of inspection (see ii. 13), and this might have suggested the starting-point of the present dedicatory procession.

The course of the procession was as follows:—

1. The Valley Gate (?).
2. Southward (ver. 31).
3. After reaching the southernmost point a turn was made to the west and the journey continued to the Dung Gate, which was a little to the north (v. 31).
4. From the Dung Gate the Fountain Gate was reached (ver. 37), from which point, instead of following the direction of the wall, a march almost direct northward seems to have been made, perhaps because henceforward the road along the wall was too narrow to hold the company, or because the tour round would require too much time to allow of the meeting of the parties at the place arranged (ver. 37).
5. Taking the direct way to the north ('straight before them,' ver. 37), they go as far as the Water Gate, ascending the steps leading across Ophel to the city. The processioning companies seem to have come together at the Guard Gate (see on ver. 39).

**31. princes** (i. e. leaders) **of Judah:** see on Ezra ix. 1.

**upon** (the wall): so the compound preposition is rightly rendered here (as in 2 Chron. xiii. 4; Jonah iv. 6); thus Keil, Reuss, Rawl., Oettli, Meinhold, Ryle.

But Siegfried and Bertholet hold that the right rendering is 'beyond' or 'above' the wall, i. e. at a point higher than the wall but not on it.

**companies . . . right hand:** render, 'companies' (M.T. 'thanksgivings'), 'and the first went to the right hand,' &c. A change in the Heb. of two words (one occurring nowhere else and certainly corrupt) is all that is necessary for this rendering.

**companies that gave thanks:** the one Heb. word so rendered is translated everywhere except in this chapter 'thanksgiving,' 'praise,' and the like (see on Ezra iii. 11 and x. 1 for the verb); but as 'appointed two thanksgivings' gives no sense most ancient and modern translators have assumed without reason that in this section the noun means a 'company giving thanks.' The present writer thinks the text is wrong, and that instead of *tōdōt*

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[1] *Gesch.* ii. 175.

cession; *whereof one went* on the right hand upon the
wall toward the dung gate: and after them went Hoshaiah, 32
and half of the princes of Judah, and Azariah, Ezra, 33
and Meshullam, Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and 34

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(thanksgivings) we should read *'ēdōt* (companies), the word used of the company of Korah (Num. xxvi. 9, xxvii. 3); of Job's circle of dependants (Job xvi. 7), and especially of the congregation of Israel (lit. 'a company assembled by appointment'). Any Hebraist will see how easily the two words could be confounded. The Syr. seems to follow the text now for the first time restored, for it translates by *kenushata* = 'companies.'

**and went in procession:** the one Heb. word here used occurs nowhere else. Read (making a slight change), 'and the one (or the first) went' (on the right hand). There is then no need for italics.

**right hand:** i. e. the south (see 1 Sam. xxiii. 24). The Hebrews named the four quarters of the heavens according to the position of one gazing to the east (a survival, perhaps, of sun-worship). Thus left hand = north (Joshua xix. 27, &c.), the front = east, and the hinder part = west (see Isa. ix. 11).

But they named these also on other principles. Thus the east is often called the direction of sun-rising (*mizrakh*), the west the 'sea' (because the Mediterranean was west of Palestine), the south *darom* (= ?), and *Negeb*, the dry (i. e. sunny) part, the north having usually the designation *ṣāphōn*, 'the hidden' (from the light of the sun) 'part.'

**dung gate:** see on ii. 13.

**32.** (after) **them:** i. e. the musicians.

**Hoshaiah:** we know nothing further of him, though he appears as the leader of the princes in this company, as Nehemiah was in the other company, another illustration of the defective state of our knowledge of the period. Perhaps, however, we are to think of a house so called and not of one man.

**33. and Azariah . . . Jeremiah:** these seven names represent priestly houses corresponding to the seven priestly houses in the other company (see ver. 41). The text has fallen into some confusion. So Guthe, Bertholet. Princes' houses are not mentioned.

**Azariah . . . Meshullam:** mentioned among the priestly houses which signed the covenant (see x. 3, 8).

**Ezra:** a house or family so called (see verses 1, 13; cf. x. 2).

**34. Judah . . . Benjamin:** these tribal names stand here for houses. Bertholet regards the occurrence of these names as a proof of the unhistorical character of the whole list.

**Shemaiah:** see ver. 6.

35 Jeremiah, and certain of the priests' sons with trumpets: Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur,
36 the son of Asaph; and his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, and Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man
37 of God; and Ezra the scribe was before them: and by the fountain gate, and straight before them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the

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**Jeremiah:** see verses 1, 13 and x. 3.

**35. priests' sons:** render 'priests,' and see on ver. 28. We have the names of these priestly houses in verses 33 f. (see on ver. 34).

**with trumpets:** see on Ezra iii. 10.

**Zechariah:** here, as being Asaphite, the clan cannot be priestly as one of the same name in the other company is (see ver. 41). See on ver. 34.

**36. Milalai:** we should probably (with *Luc.*) omit this name as a dittograph of Gilalai (more alike in Hebrew than in English). We then get eight Asaphite names, as in the other company (ver. 42).

**with the musical instruments** to the end of the verse is thought by Meyer[1], Siegfried, and Bertholet to be an addition by the Chronicler, who out of respect to Ezra (though he is not once mentioned in 'Chronicles') gives him here an important position. Certainly the introduction of Ezra's name here is unhistorical, if the individual is meant, and in any case the rôle assigned to Ezra here has been already alloted to Hoshaiah (ver. 32). A late editor, living at a time when Ezra came to be regarded as the second Moses, desired to give him a position in this company similar to that of Nehemiah in the party of the left hand. The man Ezra nowhere appears in the present context.

**David the man of God:** see ver. 24.

**37. fountain gate:** see on ii. 15.

**straight before them:** instead of following the course of the walls the procession now strikes a path due north, though for what reason we are not told (see p. 270).

**stairs,** &c.: see on iii. 15.

**city of David:** see on iii. 15.

**at the going up,** &c.: at a part of the wall that covered an elevation of ground.

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[1] *Die Entstehung,* &c., p. 200.

wall, above the house of David, even unto the water gate eastward. 38 And the other company of them that gave thanks went to meet them, and I after them, with the half of the people, upon the wall, above the tower of the furnaces, even unto the broad wall; 39 and above the gate of Ephraim, and by the old gate, and by the fish gate, and the tower of [a] Hananel, and the tower of [a] Ham-

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[a] Or, *The hundred*

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**above the house of David:** i. e. the traditional site, some ruins of which were then perhaps to be seen. It is possible that some well-known private house had this name.

The party leaves the wall at the ascent referred to, passing northwards by the site of the royal palace. Kent denies that the procession left the wall at all until the other company was reached; but he depends for proof on notions of Jerusalem topography which are now universally discarded.

**above** (the house, &c.): we have here in Hebrew the same combination of prepositions as that rendered 'upon' in ver. 31 (see on).

38–43. *Procession of the left-hand* (*northern*) *party.*

**38. company of them that gave thanks:** read 'company,' and see on ver. 31.

**went:** follows a slightly but rightly corrected text.

**to meet them:** read (making a small change) 'on the left' (=to the north: see on ver. 31). The Hebrew word in the M.T. is in its present form a monstrosity, and has no meaning.

**with the half of the people:** i. e. as many princes, priests, and Levites as belonged to the right-hand party (see 32 ff.). There is not the slightest need (with Guthe, Bertholet, and Löhr) to read 'with the half of the princes of the people.' The half extends here to all the classes enumerated in 32 ff.

**above:** i. e. some distance from; the same double preposition translated 'upon' in ver. 31 (see on).

**tower of the furnaces:** see on iii. 11.

**broad wall:** see on iii. 8.

**39. gate of Ephraim:** see on iii. 6. As it is not mentioned in Nehemiah's tour of inspection the word **above** (the gate, &c.) implies probably that this gate did not lie in line with the wall here spoken of, but some distance to the south.

**the old gate**: see on iii. 6.

**fish gate**: see on iii. 3.

**tower of Hananel . . . tower of Hammeah . . . sheep gate:** see on iii. 1.

meah, even unto the sheep gate: and they stood still in
40 the gate of the guard. So stood the two companies of
them that gave thanks in the house of God, and I, and
41 the half of the [a] rulers with me: and the priests, Eliakim,
Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and
42 Hananiah, with trumpets; and Maaseiah, and Shemaiah,
and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah,
and Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang loud, with
43 Jezrahiah their overseer. And they offered great sacrifices that day, and rejoiced; for God had made them
rejoice with great joy; and the women also and the
children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard
even afar off.

[a] Or, *deputies*

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**stood still:** better, 'entered': see on Ezra iii. 10; cf. next verse.

**gate of the guard:** better, 'prison gate.' This cannot be the wall gate leading directly into the guard court (see on iii. 25), for that would fix it too much to the south. Probably we are to understand the 'gate of Hammephkad' (see on iii. 31), i.e. the gate opposite to the prison, and it is likely that the original Hebrew text read accordingly, the beginning of both names being identical. The Hebrew word has come into the present text through the influence of iii. 25.

**40. stood:** see on ver. 39. The two bands entered the Prison Gate and formed one company in the Temple area.

**companies of them that gave thanks:** read 'companies,' and see on ver. 31.

**in the house of God:** to be attached to the preceding verb 'entered' (E.VV. **stood**).

In verses 40–42 we have the same order as in the description of the procession of the right-hand (south) party: (1) The musicians, (2) Nehemiah and half the rulers, (3) Priests, (4) Levites.

**41. with trumpets:** see on Ezra iii. 10.

**42. sang loud:** lit., 'caused (those round about) to hear': see 1 Chron. xv. 19.

**43. great sacrifices:** see Ezra vi. 17.

**God had made them rejoice:** see viii. 12, 17; Ezra vi. 22; 2 Chron. xx. 27.

**women . . . children:** see viii. 2, x. 29.

**joy:** i.e. its manifestation.

**afar off:** see Ezra iii. 13.

And on that day were men appointed over the 44
chambers for the treasures, for the heave offerings, for
the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them,
according to the fields of the cities, the portions [a]appointed
by the law for the priests and Levites: for Judah rejoiced
for the priests and for the Levites that [b]waited. And they 45

[a] Heb. *of the law.* [b] Heb. *stood.*

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44–47. PROVISION FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE TEMPLE OFFICIALS.
This section bears in a special degree the marks of late editing, as do the following three verses, and Kosters, Torrey, Meyer, and Bertholet have no hesitation in ascribing ver. 44–xiii. 3 to the Chronicler as a kind of historical support for xiii. 4 ff., 10 ff.; see especially ver. 47.

**44.** Those appointed over the treasure chambers in this verse had to see that the Temple dues brought were safely housed, whereas the 'treasurers' in xiii. 13 were to preside over the distribution of what was brought.

**chambers,** or 'cells': see on iii. 30 and Ezra viii. 29. **treasures** (= stores) and **heave offerings** seem both general terms, the second restricting the first to such as were sacred offerings, and the latter being further defined as 'firstfruits,' &c.

**heave offerings:** better 'sacred gifts' or 'contributions': see on x. 37.

**firstfruits:** see x. 38, where the same Hebrew word occurs, and on x. 37, where another Hebrew word ('first ripe fruits'), often similarly translated, is found.

**tithes:** see on x. 37 f.

**according to the fields,** &c.: the gifts were sorted in the chambers according to the localities which supplied them. The Versions and many MSS. read 'according to the princes,' &c.

**the portions**: see ver. 47. The Hebrew word is written rather peculiarly, but no difference is meant, and the variations of spelling are explainable.

**Judah rejoiced:** a very naïve remark if (as seems likely) we are to see here the hand of a priest.

**that waited:** lit. 'that stood': see 1 Chron. vi. 32 f. (Heb., verses 17 f.), and for the full phrase 'to stand before Yahweh' (= 'to serve') see Deut. x. 8. It is generally used of the priests when performing their duties in the Temple. Cf. Milton's

'They also serve who stand and wait.'
('On his Blindness.')

**45.** See 2 Chron. xiii. 11. Render, 'And they took charge of the service of their God and of the purification,' &c.

kept the ward of their God, and the ward of the purification, and *so did* the singers and the porters, according to the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son.
46 For in the days of David and Asaph of old [a] there was a chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanks-
47 giving unto God. And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, gave the portions of the singers and the porters, as every day required: and they sanctified for the Levites; and the Levites sanctified for the sons of Aaron.

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[a] Another reading is, *there were chiefs.*

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**kept the ward:** lit. 'they kept the thing to be kept.' The verb has often the meaning 'to discharge the duties of an office,' especially of the priesthood: see Num. iii. 10, xviii. 7, &c. Hence the verb with its cognate noun, as here, Lev. viii. 35, &c., means simply to perform the duties entrusted to them as priests, Levites, &c.

**purification:** see 1 Chron. xxiii. 28.

**according to the commandment of David and of Solomon:** see 1 Chron. xxiii–xxvi; 2 Chron. viii. 14.

**46.** Render, 'For in the days of David Asaph in the olden time was chief,' &c.

**and** (Asaph): omit with the Greek (both LXX and *Luc.*), Syriac, and Vulgate versions and one Hebrew Cod. The two time references seem redundant. Bertholet renders, 'For in the days of David and Asaph the chiefs (adding the consonant) of the singers were appointed (inserting one letter in the Hebrew word rendered **of old**) (with reference to) the songs of praise,' &c. But with the changes he proposes the last part of the verse hangs in the air, 'and songs,' &c.

For **chief** the *qr*, Vulg., and many MSS. read the plural 'chiefs.'

**47.** The editor wishes to make it quite plain that from the time of Zerubbabel to that of Nehemiah the Temple dues were paid.

**sanctified:** i.e. set apart: see Luke xxvii. 14, 16 ff.; 1 Chron. xxvi. 27.

**sons of Aaron:** i.e. Aaronites, P's word for the priests proper as distinct from the Levites. Ezekiel's term is 'Zadokites' (or sons of Zadok).

[U] On that day they read in the book of Moses in 13 the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that an Ammonite and a Moabite should not

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XIII. For general remarks as to the relation of this chapter to ch. x see pp. 242 ff.

1–3. *Exclusion of the mixed multitude.*

This section supplies an excellent introduction to verses 4–9, and, whether or not by Nehemiah, was placed where it is because it refers to the law which was Nehemiah's authority in excluding Tobiah (the Ammonite) from the Temple chamber.

Many would remove these three verses from their present setting. W. Robertson Smith[1], followed essentially by Geissler[2], and at one time by Bertholet[3], would insert verses 1 f. between Ezra ix. 9 and 10, or thereabouts. Kosters thought verses 1–3 should introduce Neh. ix f., while Marquart would join the whole of xiii to Ezra ix f. But one may expect the law to have been read by other leaders than Ezra, and, indeed, as often as the conduct of the people called for special reference to its requirements. There is surely no necessity to think that the evil of mixed marriages was dealt with on only one or two special occasions in the life of Ezra and Nehemiah. Moreover, the steps which are now taken differ from anything previously done, and the Scripture referred to is also different. The walls had been dedicated and certain regulations made for the support of the clergy of all grades (xii. 44–47)—what more natural than to set about the purification of the community from all non-Jewish elements?

If we are to remove verses 1–3, the most suitable place for them next to their present one is after ver. 9, so that Nehemiah's treatment of Tobiah would supply the occasion for the course described in ver. 3. The words 'before this,' &c., might have been inserted after verses 1–3 got to be where they are.

**1. On that day:** the reference is general, as in xii. 44, unless verses 1–3 are placed after ver. 9, in which case the day when Nehemiah excluded Tobiah will be meant.

**in the book of Moses:** see on viii. 1.

**found written:** i. e. in Deut. xxiii. 3–5. Note the large use made in Ezra-Nehemiah of Deuteronomy.

**Ammonite:** Tobiah (see verses 4 ff.) was an Ammonite: see on ii. 10.

**Moabite:** Bertholet thinks that Sanballat was a Moabite and that he is in the writer's mind here. But it is unlikely that he was a Moabite at all. See on ii. 10.

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[1] *OTJC.*⁽²⁾ 427, n 2. [2] p. 45. [3] On Deut. xxiii. 4–7.

2 enter into the assembly of God for ever; because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, to curse them:
3 howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing. And it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they
4 separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.

[**N**] Now before this, Eliashib the priest, who was

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**the assembly** (of God): see on Ezra ii. 64, where the same word is translated 'congregation.'

**2. because they met not,** &c.: Ammonites and Moabites are excluded here on the ground of an historical episode, but according to Deut. xxiii. 2 (cf. with Gen. xix. 30 ff. (J)) as the children of incest, the latter ground being the more ancient.

**3. the mixed multitude:** the Hebrew word here (*'ereb*) occurs nowhere else in Ezra-Nehemiah, a reason for regarding this as a section apart from what has preceded. In Jer. xxv. 20 the word is used of the foreign population settled in Egypt for trade and other purposes. In Jer. l. 37 and in Ezek. xxx. 5 (though Cornill reads 'Arabs' in the latter passage) it denotes foreigners residing in Babylon. Apart from the immediate connexion one might conclude from general usage that the word means here non-Jews in and around Jerusalem who had some kind of status in the community (or assembly) of Yahweh. But in the light of the context we must interpret the word to mean all whose pure Jewish blood had been in any way compromised by mixed marriages, though the latter might have belonged to a former and even a remote generation. Meyer[1], altering the vowels of the word, reads 'Arabs,' i. e. Bedouin Arabs. But to speak of the separation of Israel from the Arabs, especially after the allusion to Ammonites and Moabites, would seem passing strange! The word in the sense here implied occurs only in the passages mentioned above. In Lev. xiii. 52, &c. (P) it denotes the woof of a garment.

4–9. *Tobiah's possessions cast out of the Temple chamber (cell).*

About 433 B.C. Nehemiah had for some unknown reason returned to the court at Susa. During his absence many irregularities had arisen, and in the remainder of this chapter we have an account of measures adopted after his return for removing some of them. Since the sacred dues had ceased to be paid (see verses 10–13) the chambers were no longer required for their usual purposes, so that Tobiah had been allowed to occupy two appointed over the [a] chambers of the house of our God, being allied unto Tobiah, had prepared for him a great 5 chamber, where aforetime they laid the meal offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the

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[1] p. 130.

[a] Heb. *chamber*.

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or more, making them one large one: see ver. 5. Tobiah was doubly disqualified for using the chambers in the Temple enclosure, for he was neither a priest nor Levite, nor was he even a Jew (see on ii. 10).

**4. Eliashib the priest:** it is agreed among scholars that the well-known high-priest of that name is meant (see on Ezra x. 6), though Herzfeld[1] denies this. It is possible that the word 'high' has fallen out before **priest.** As regards his having charge of the Temple chambers (cells), we know too little of the duties of the priesthood and high-priesthood of the time to conclude that the office here ascribed to Eliashib shows he was but an ordinary priest taking his turn with other priests.

**chambers:** see on Ezra viii. 29.

**being allied,** &c.: no one knows how, though many conjectures have been hazarded: see Ber.-Rys., Winckler[2], and Ryle.

**5. a great chamber:** probably two or more smaller ones had been thrown into one by the removal of the separating walls. In these chambers, before they had been made one, sacred gifts of various kinds had been stored, but now these had been put away to make room for Tobiah's 'household stuff' (ver. 8).

**meal offerings:** render, 'offerings.' The word has here, as in Malachi, the general sense which it bears in the older codes. In P it denotes cereal as opposed to flesh offerings. We are here, therefore, in this verse at an earlier stage of custom and law than that which meets us in P and related writings (Chron. &c.): see p. 18 f.

**frankincense:** lit. 'what is white,' so called from its colour. Our 'Albion' has the same consonants and perhaps (?) the same etymology as the Hebrew word here used (*lebonah*). The word stands strictly for a sweet-smelling gum or resin, obtained by exudation from various species of the Boswellia, a tree closely allied to the terebinth. It formed one ingredient of incense (see Exod. xxx. 34), but was offered also alone as a separate species of sacrifice (see Isa. xliii. 23, lxvi. 3; Jer. vi. 20). These references show that the present passage is not necessarily later than Nehemiah's time and hardly as late as the Priestly Code. The word translated 'incense' (*qeṭoret*) is used in pre-exilic writings for sacrificial smoke and nothing else. In P it means certain spices burnt to afford Yahweh a sweet odour. Such sacrifices as these—frankin-

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[1] *Geschichte*⁽²⁾, ii. 146.

[2] *Alt. Orient. Forsch.* i. 233.

corn, the wine, and the oil, which were given by commandment to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters;
6 and the heave offerings for the priests. But in all this *time* I was not at Jerusalem: for in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I went unto the king, and after certain days asked I leave of the king:
7 and I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah, in preparing him a
8 chamber in the courts of the house of God. And it grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff
9 of Tobiah out of the chamber. Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers: and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meal offerings
10 and the frankincense. And I perceived that the portions

cense, &c.—originated among the Hebrews and Arabs at a comparatively late period, as they imply an advanced stage of civilization and consequent luxury[1].

**tithes:** see on x. 32 f.

**6. Artaxerxes:** see Ezra vii. 1.

**Babylon:** to the Hebrews this city would continue to appear as the capital of the Eastern world.

**after certain days:** lit. 'at the end of days,' the words being used vaguely for an indefinite period, as in 1 Kings xvii. 7; cf. Gen. iv. 3. Marquart reads 'at the end of his days,' i. e. when the time of his furlough had expired.

**7. chamber:** see on iii. 30.

**courts:** read (with LXX, Guthe, &c.), 'court.' The Temple court is meant.

**8. household stuff:** probably what is chiefly, if not exclusively, meant is the vessels, &c., used in sacrifice.

10–14. *Nehemiah re-establishes the payment to the Temple officials of their dues.*

This section explains how Tobiah was able to appropriate for his own use the large chamber (see on ver. 5) which was allotted him by Eliashib. The firstfruits, tithes, &c., had ceased to be paid (verses 10–13), so that the Temple storehouses (see on ver. 12) were no longer required for their ordinary purposes.

The fact that Nehemiah reproaches the people (ver. 11) for

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[1] According to Sayce they existed among the Babylonians and Egyptians as far back as B.C. 3000.

of the Levites had not been given them; so that the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field. Then contended I with the 11
[a] rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and 12

[a] Or, *deputies*

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neglecting to pay their contributions shows that laws regulating such contributions had been made and proclaimed, i. e. verses 10–14 in the present chapter presuppose x. 37–39 (see p. 277).

**10. portions:** see on xii. 44.

**the Levites:** since the priests were to receive a tithe of the Levites' tithe (see x. 37–39) it is surprising that we do not read of their losses as well as those of the Levites: see at p. 243. But it is exceedingly likely that the word **Levites** has here its wider sense and includes both priests and Levites. The addition of **singers** (probably 'and porters' must be added), as distinct from porters, lends support to this view.

**were fled every one to his field:** this is a confirmation of what is said in xi. 1 f. Up to the time when the walls were completed Jerusalem was very thinly populated, the great mass of the Jewish community, official and lay, residing in the country and supporting themselves on their several plots of land or otherwise. Priests and others had transferred themselves to the capital, and arrangements for their maintenance had been made, which in Nehemiah's absence had not been observed, so that they were obliged to return to the land.

According to the Deuteronomic code, priests (including Levites who are in that code synonymous with them) were to have no inheritance, but to depend for their support on altar dues, &c. (see Deut. xviii. 1 ff.). But after the destruction of the Temple religious as well as political organizations fell to pieces, so that for a long period after the exile the priests and Levites had to earn their own living. In Ezek. and in the P code (see Num. xxxv) certain cities were set apart for the Levites.

**11. contended I,** &c.: see verses 17, 21, 25.

**rulers:** Heb. *seganim*: see on ii. 16 and on Ezra ix. 1, where another word (rendered 'princes') with the same meaning occurs.

**Why is the house of God forsaken?** See on x. 39.

(I gathered) **them:** i. e. the Levites: see on ver. 10.

**and set them in their place:** i. e. restored them to their Temple posts.

**12. Judah:** i. e. the lay part of the community of the return, the *gola*, though it included some who were never out of the land: see on i. 2 and on vi. 21; cf. xii. 31, 44.

13 the wine and the oil unto the treasuries. And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful, and their business
14 was to distribute unto their brethren. Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my [a] good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the observances thereof.

15 In those days saw I in Judah some treading winepresses

[a] Heb. *kindnesses*.

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**treasuries**: the same Hebrew word is rightly rendered 'treasures' in xii. 44. Here it means rooms (chambers) where the treasures (firstfruits, tithes, &c.) were stored: see ver. 5, xii. 44; 2 Chron. xxxii. 27.

**13. I made treasurers**: the one Hebrew word (a verb explained as a denominative of the noun = 'treasure') occurs nowhere else, and it is better (with LXX Cod. ℵ, *Luc.*, Syr., Ryssel, Klostermann, Guthe-Batten) to read, 'I appointed over the treasuries Shelemiah,' &c.

**Shelemiah, Zadok,** and **Hanan** are mentioned in the same connexion among those that repaired the wall: see iii. 29 f.

Zadok was, like Ezra, a priest (see iii. 29; cf. vii. 40) and a scribe (see on Ezra vii. 6).

**Pedaiah**: see viii. 4.

**next to them**: lit. 'at their hand, ready to help': see on iii. 2, where the words seem to have a different sense; cf. xi. 24, 'at the king's hand.'

**Zaccur**: see xii. 35.

**Mattaniah**: see xi. 17, xii. 8, 25, 38.

Ryle thinks that Shelemiah represented the Temple priests, Zadok the 'judicial' section of the priests, Pedaiah the Levites proper, and Hanan the singers and porters.

**14.** See on v. 19. We have such a prayer at the close of each description of a reform due to Nehemiah: see verses 14, 22, 31.

15–22. *Provisions made for the strict observance of the Sabbath among the Hebrews.* See on x. 31, and for a history of the Hebrew Sabbath on ix. 14.

**15. in Judah**: the provisions were prepared in the country parts and then brought on the Sabbath day into Jerusalem.

**treading winepresses**: see Lam. i. 15; Isa. lxiii. 2. In the on the sabbath, and bringing in [a] sheaves, and lading asses *therewith*; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified *against them* in the day wherein they sold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre 16 also therein, which brought in fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the 17 nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is

[a] Or, *heaps of corn*

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process of making wine the grapes were placed in a stone receptacle called *gai* (Eng. 'wine-press') and afterwards trodden with bare feet. The juice thus obtained passed into a lower receptacle called *yegeb* (Eng. 'wine-vat'). Often wine-press and wine-vat were hewn out of the solid rock *in situ*. The E.VV. do not consistently observe the distinction between these words, for *yegeb* ('wine-vat') is called 'wine-press' in some nine or ten cases, e.g. Num. xviii. 27, 30; Deut. xv. 14; Judges vii. 21; Job v. 2; Jer. xlviii. 31, &c.

**bringing in:** i. e. harvesting.

**sheaves:** the margin is better.

The order in which the treading of wine-presses and the in-gathering of corn is mentioned here is not that of nature, as the vintage is later than the corn harvest by many weeks.

**I testified,** &c.: Hebrew idiom requires that the verb should be followed by the preposition translated 'in' (the day). It would make the construction simpler and the sense clearer if we read with Bertholet (making a few changes): 'And I testified against them when they sold victuals.' The M.T. is understood to say that the goods brought into Jerusalem were not sold until some day in the following week; but the construction is singular and vague, as the English will show. Bertheau, Schultz, Ryssel, and Ryle thought that no actual selling took place on the Sabbath, but ver. 16 proves the contrary.

**16. men of Tyre:** perhaps descendants of those who helped in the rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra iii. 7); or they may have settled in the city to receive and sell (dried) fish sent them by kinsmen. 'Sidon' (near Tyre) means probably 'Fishing town.'

**the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem:** omit **and** with Arab., Syr., Vulg., and some MSS., rendering 'the Judahites in Jerusalem.'

**17. nobles:** see on ii. 16. Nehemiah concentrates his censure

18 this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not
your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil
upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath
19 upon Israel by profaning the sabbath. And it came to
pass that, when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark
before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should
be shut, and commanded that they should not be opened
till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I
over the gates, that there should no burden be brought
20 in on the sabbath day. So the merchants and sellers of
all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice.
21 Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why
lodge ye [a] about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay
hands on you. From that time forth came they no more
22 on the sabbath. And I commanded the Levites that

[a] Heb. *before.*

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on them because they were responsible for the existing state of things.

**profane:** secularize, i. e. treat the Sabbath as an ordinary day.

**18.** See Jer. xvii. 21 ff. and cf. Ezra's prayer (Ezra ix. 6–15) and Nehemiah's (ix).

**your fathers . . . our God:** note the striking contrast of pronouns.

**upon us:** i. e. upon our nation. LXX$^B$, *Luc.*, Guthe read 'upon them and upon us.'

**19–22.** *The regulations made by Nehemiah.*

**19. when the gates . . . began to be dark:** more literally, 'as soon as the gates . . . began to have shadows on them,' or 'to have darkness on them.'

The gates were large stone structures with doors on either side, and usually a large one in the centre. It was through the side doors that passengers entered, the ordinary traffic (horses, &c.) passing through the central door, or rather gate: see on vi. i.

**20.** Though goods could not be brought into the city on the Sabbath, the people went out to buy, so that the Sabbath was broken all the same.

**22.** What were the Levites commanded to do?

1. To cleanse themselves ceremonially: see Ezra vi. 20; Neh. xii. 30.

2. Having temporarily appointed some of his own servants

they should purify themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember unto me, O my God, this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

In those days also saw I the Jews that [a]had married 23
women of Ashdod, of Ammon, *and* of Moab: and their 24
children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could
not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and 25
[b]cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked

[a] Heb. *had made to dwell* with them. [b] Or, *reviled*

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(see on iv. 16) to guard the gates during the Sabbath, Nehemiah made permanent appointment of some Levites to undertake the task. Reuss thinks that it is the Temple gates alone that the Levites are here commanded to watch, but through these gates goods for sale could hardly be brought. It must be admitted, however, that the Hebrew is strange.

23–29. *Nehemiah's strenuous protest against mixed marriages*: see ix. 2, x. 28, 30; Ezra ix. 1 ff., x. 1 ff.

**23. saw I:** perhaps during a tour of inspection (see ver. 15).

**had married:** see R.Vm. and on Ezra x. 2.

**24. their children:** the marriages were of some standing, as the children were old enough to be able to speak.

**speech of Ashdod:** perhaps a dialectical variety of Hebrew, but as we have no specimen of it its real character must always remain a problem [1].

**the Jews' language:** such Heb. as Nehemiah spoke and wrote. It is a great mistake to think that the Jews spoke Aramaic and not Hebrew after the return, though that was once the common view. Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and Nehemiah are written in excellent Hebrew, and so is most of Ezra.

**according to the language:** an awkward sentence, and probably (with the LXX) to be rejected as a gloss. The words can mean only that the other half spoke in the languages or dialects of the Ammonites and Moabites.

**25. I contended:** see verses 11, 17.

**cursed them:** i. e. the men. The same verb occurs in ver. 2, Mal. iii. 9, iv. 6. The curse would be conditional (see on x. 29),

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[1] An Egyptian inscription of the 26th Dynasty (cir. B. C. 660) mentions the language of the Philistines as a distinct form of speech —so says Professor Sayce.

off their hair, and made them swear by God, *saying*, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves.
26 Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, and he was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did strange
27 women cause to sin. Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to trespass against our God in
28 marrying strange women? And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son in law to Sanballat the Horonite: therefore I chased him from

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'May ye suffer . . . if ye put not away your strange wives.' The same verb in another species (*Hiph.*) means to treat with contempt, lit., 'to make little of' (a Welsh idiom), and Gesenius, Dathe, Lee, and others so explain here (see R.Vm). But without altering the vowels it can hardly have this sense here.

**smote:** in Egypt, Palestine, &c., persons are whipped with the koorbash and struck with the hand in a way that would be firmly resented in the West by the most menial.

**plucked off their hair:** see on Ezra ix. 3.

**26. Did not Solomon,** &c.: see 1 Kings xi. 1–8, iii. 17; 2 Sam. xii. 25.

**no king like him:** see 1 Kings iii. 12 f.; 2 Chron. i. 12.

**strange** (= 'foreign') **women:** see on Ezra x. 2.

**27. Shall we then hearken,** &c.: the verb is in form either passive third per. sing. or active first per. plur. We should probably render, 'As regards you (first for emphasis) is it (= can it be) reported that ye do all this,' &c. (see Deut. iv. 32): so Bertheau, Ryssel, Bertholet, &c. But Siegfried and others prefer to follow the LXX, Vulg., and the E.VV., rendering 'Shall we then listen to you' (i.e. your pleadings, &c.), 'that you may do,' &c. 'If Solomon failed to avoid the connecting evils, is it likely that you will?'

**28. Eliashib the high priest:** the latter words can as well, according to the Heb., go with Joiada (xii. 10), so that it is not certain that Eliashib was at the time alive.

**Sanballat:** see on ii. 10.

**I chased him,** &c.: i. e. apparently, 'I expelled him from the community.'

It is with this incident that Josephus[1] connects the building of

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[1] *Antiq.* xi. 7, 2; v. 8, 2 f.

me. Remember them, O my God, [a] because they have 29
defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites. Thus cleansed I them from 30
[b] all strangers, and appointed wards for the priests and for
the Levites, every one in his work; and for the wood 31
offering, at times appointed, and for the firstfruits.
Remember me, O my God, for good.

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[a] Heb. *for the defilings of &c.* [b] Or, *every thing strange*

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the Temple on Mount Gerizim in the time of Alexander the Great. But it is probable that he confounds the present incident with the expulsion of Manasses in 330 B.C.

**29. Remember,** &c.: in a bad sense, as in vi. 14. Contrast the force of the same verb in ver. 31, &c.

**defiled the priesthood:** see Lev. xx. 13–15. Joiada, if not now high-priest, was to hold that position after his father's death.

**the covenant of,** &c.: render, 'the covenant of the priests (so *Luc.*, Guthe) and of the Levites' (see Mal. ii. 4-9, and Deut. xxxiii. 9).

30 f. *Nehemiah's own résumé of the work he did.*

**30.** (cleansed I) **them:** i. e. the priests and Levites.

**from all strangers:** Heb. 'from everything foreign,' i. e. foreign wives, religious rites, &c.

**wards:** successive watches or courses of priests and Levites (see on xii. 44 f.).

**in his work:** i. e. Temple service. Better (with LXX$^B$, *Luc.*, Guthe), 'according to **his work.**' The change is of one consonant for another almost exactly like it.

**31. the wood offering:** see on x. 34.

**firstfruits:** see on x. 35–37.

**Remember me,** &c.: see verses 14, 22, v. 19.

# THE BOOK OF ESTHER

## INTRODUCTION

AND

## REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

# ESTHER

## INTRODUCTION

### I. NAME OF THE BOOK.

THIS book is called in the Talm. B[1] *Megillat Ester*, or 'The Roll of Esther' (see under next section). It is also called by way of pre-eminence 'The Roll,' on account of the peculiar respect in which it was held.

In editions of the Hebrew Bible it is called simply 'Esther,' as it is also in the Greek versions. In the Syriac (Pesh.) and Vulg. the title is 'Book of Esther.'

In the enlarged version of the book current among the Alexandrians the name 'The Epistle of Purim' seems to have been given it, from a misunderstanding of Esther ix. 20, 29 (see on). But this title never came into general use, even at Alexandria.

### II. PLACE IN THE CANON.

In our Hebrew Bible this book appears last of the five 'rolls' (*Megillot*), all of which are in the third 'Canon' of the O. T., that called the *Ketubim* ('writings') or *Hagiographa* ('Holy Things,' so called on account of the presence of the Psalms in it). The first of the five rolls to be so called was Esther, which received the name 'The Roll' at this time when, through its connexion with Purim, it came to be written on a separate parchment roll. On account of its being read during Purim[2] the term 'roll' came to be applied to four other books read on other festivals as follows:—(1) Canticles, read on Passover;

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[1] *Baba Bathra*, xiv B.

[2] The rules for the reading are given in full in the Talmudic Tract *Megillah.*

(2) Ruth, read on Pentecost; (3) Lamentations, read on the ninth of Ab, the day set apart for the commemoration of the destruction of Jerusalem in 586; (4) Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes), read during the Feast of Tabernacles. For other positions of this book in the MSS. and other editions of the Hebrew and Greek Bibles see Ryle, on *The Canon of the O.T.*(2), p. 292 ff., &c.

In the Talm. B. Berak. 57 B, we have a twofold arrangement of the *Ketubim* (*Hagiographa*).

1. The large 'K.' (Psalms, Proverbs, Job).

2. The small 'K.' (Canticles, Qoheleth, and Lamentations).

In his valuable work on the Canon (2) [1] Professor (now Bishop) Ryle makes a mistake in substituting Esther for Lamentations in (2) above.

The Talmudic passage is translated and commented on by the present writer in *The Interpreter*, July, 1909.

Esther is among the *Antilegomena*, or disputed books of the Hebrew Canon, the others being Ezekiel, Jonah, Proverbs, Canticles, and Qoheleth. The right of Esther to a place in the Canon was contested by many leading Jews and Christians down to the fourth century of our era. Paton (p. 97) affirms, what neither he nor any one else has proved, that the Jewish Synod held at Jamnia in A. D. 90 decreed this book to be canonical. It is absent from the list of O.T. books given by representative Jews to Melito, Bishop of Sardis (d. A. D. 175), and in the fourth century both Athanasius and Gregory Nazianzen [2] (d. 389) denied it to be canonical. In the Eastern Church its canonicity was a matter of dispute even in the Middle Ages, for it was stoutly denied by Nicephorus Callistus [3] (d. *circa* 1330), though its recognition in the West was finally secured through its acceptance by the Council of Carthage (A. D. 397).

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[1] p. 293.

[2] Wildeboer, *Canon*, &c., 77.

[3] Westcott, *The Bible in the Church*, p. 227.

One has to bear in mind the following features of the book to understand the suspicion with which it was regarded alike by Jews and Christians.

1. The Divine Being is not once mentioned or referred to from end to end of the book (this applies, however, to 1 Macc. also in critical texts): see on v. 4.

2. No other part of the O.T. is referred to in this book, not even the *Torah*, nor is anything said about Jerusalem, the Temple, sacrifice, or about any festival except Purim, which has a secular origin and has no sanction in the Torah, &c.

3. The book is not once quoted in the N.T., a statement which, however, is equally true of Canticles, Qoheleth, Ezra, Nehemiah, and even the prophetical books Obadiah, Nahum, and Zephaniah.

4. More important than the absence of religious phraseology and of the religious spirit is the presence throughout the book of a low ethical standard. It is true that the treachery and cruelty of Haman are by implication condemned, but the writer gloats over the equal cruelty of Mordecai and Esther. Nothing seems wrong if only it furthers the advancement of the Jews—not of Judaism—for this last there is no concern whatever.

It is not, therefore, surprising that Luther wished the book did not exist, and that Ewald[1] said of it: 'Its story knows nothing of high and pure truths. In it we fall as if from heaven to earth.'

The book would never have been admitted into the Canon at all but that it gives an ostensible account of the origin of the Purim Feast, which the Jews had made religious, and supplies reasons for its observance.

Nevertheless in quite early times Esther came to occupy a position in the esteem and veneration of Jews second to the *Torah* (Pentateuch) alone, a position which it continues to hold. Rabbi b. Lakish (*circa* A.D. 300) says that Esther stands next to the *Torah*, while Maimonides

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[1] *History* (Eng. Trans.), i. 197.

(d. A.D. 1204) says that when the Messiah comes the other books of the O.T. may pass away, but the *Torah* and Esther will abide for ever.

## APOCRYPHAL ADDITIONS TO ESTHER.

In the oldest and best MSS. of the LXX (B. A., the Sinaitic, &c.) the book of Esther is much larger than in the M.T., for it contains 270 verses as compared with 163 in the Hebrew text. These additions are scattered throughout the book, and have for aim the supplying of the religious element which in the book is quite lacking. In Jerome's version and in the Vulg., which is based on it, the longest and most important of these additions are taken out of their context and put together at the end of the Canonical book, thus making them in a large measure unintelligible. In English, Welsh, and other modern versions not dependent on the Vulg., the above additions appear in the Apocrypha ('The Rest of the Chapters of the Book of Esther'). The editions of the LXX by Tischendorf-Nestle, Swete, &c., include these parts, and place them in their original connexion, which is the arrangement followed in the English translation of the LXX by Brereton. Thompson's English LXX leaves out the Apocrypha altogether, rendering the canonical parts only of the Greek Bible. 'The Rest of . . . Esther' is so obviously a later attempt to correct the non-religious character of the original Esther that no modern scholar defends their genuineness or could do so with any show of reason.

In the notes on Esther in the present volume the Apocryphal parts of the book are indicated by square brackets in the context in which they occur in the LXX, thus [Apoc. Esther xi. 2–xii. 6]. In Swete's edition they are designated by the letters **A**, **B**, &c., as follows :—

**A** (Lat. Eng. xi. 2–xii. 6) : Mordecai's dream ; how he came to honour ; precedes Esther i. 1.

**B** (Lat. Eng. xiii. 1–7) : Letter of Artaxerxes ; follows Esther iii. 13.

**C** (Lat. Eng. xiii. 8–xiv. 19): The prayers of Mordecai and Esther; follows Esther iv. 17.

**D** (Lat. xv. 4–19, Eng. xvi. 1–16): Esther visits the king and wins his favour; follows **C**, preceding immediately Esther v.

**E** (Lat. Eng. xvi. 1–24): Letter of Artaxerxes; follows Esther viii. 12.

**F** (Lat. Eng. x. 4–xi): Epilogue describing the establishment of Purim; follows Esther x. 3.

Besides the lengthy interpolations noticed above there are also in the LXX small additions which are omitted from the Latin version and therefore from the English and Welsh Apocrypha, these additions being for the most part explanatory glosses. There are also in the LXX numerous omissions of words and sentences found in the M.T. A careful study of the additions and of the omissions makes it evident that the M.T. represents the original text of the book.

Modern scholars almost to a man agree that the 'Additions' are some decades later in date (say 100 B.C.) than the Canonical Esther, though they owe their existence to the same movement of thought and feeling as those which prompted our Esther and the many Targums and Midrashes on the book. Some writers (chiefly Roman Catholic divines like Langen, Kaulen, and Scholtz) maintain that the original language of the 'Additions' was Hebrew or Aramaic. But a careful study of the text makes it plain that its language is that of one writing originally in Greek and not translating. And many other considerations confirm the conclusion thus reached. See Ryssel, *Kautzsch. Apoc.* i. 193 ff., and Fuller, *Speaker's Bible*, *Apoc.* i. $36^2$ ff.

## III. ABSTRACT OF CONTENTS.

The book gives the history of Esther and her cousin Mordecai, and tells how the former became Xerxes' queen and Mordecai that king's grand vizier, and how both secured the deliverance of their people the Jews from the massacre planned by Haman, in commemoration of which deliverance the Feast of Purim was established.

For more detailed analysis see the annotations on the text in which the various sections and subsections of Esther and the 'Rest of Esther' are laid out and summarized.

### IV. AIM AND CHARACTER OF THE BOOK.

The Commentaries and Introductions say with practically one voice that the purpose contemplated in writing this book was to supply motives for the keeping of the Feast Purim. But this is a superficial view to take. Why should the Jews of the circle to which the writer belonged be obsessed by a desire to make *this particular festival*, about which their law says nothing, permanent? And why with such a desire was such a book as Esther written? To the first question the present writer's answer is that this institution had become a part of the nation's life and could not be suppressed. The question would naturally arise, If this feast of heathen origin and with heathen suggestions *must be* tolerated, how can it be emptied of its heathen contents and be made the channel through which Jewish patriotism, such as had been recently displayed in the Maccabean wars, should be expressed and reinforced? That was the task the writer seems to have set before him, and in the Hebrew Esther we have his attempt to perform it—an admirable attempt too, judged from the literary and every other point of view, though at times the author is guilty of inconsistencies and anachronisms which will be pointed out and commented on in the notes.

Esther is therefore a didactic romance, a novel with a purpose, like many of the novels of Charles Kingsley, Dickens, and George Eliot.

Is the book historical in the literal sense? To this question the answer of the older commentators and of many moderns has been 'Yes' (Hävernick, Keil, &c.).

Since the time of Semler (Professor at Halle, d. 1791), who made a vigorous onslaught upon the historicity of the book, scholars have come more and more to regard Esther as a romance, composed to set forth and illustrate the ideas the author wished to have connected with Purim. An intermediate position is taken up by many scholars (Schultz, &c.), viz. that there is a basis of fact in the book, though the latter is to a large extent the work of the writer's imagination, controlled, of course, by his purpose. No one has up to the present been able to find out this nucleus of fact and to support it from external sources. The historical background of the book is almost certainly the patriotism evoked by the Maccabean wars, as Spinoza[1], that marvellous forerunner in philosophy, science, and biblical criticism, surmised, though he assigned a similar date for Ezra-Nehemiah, which is absurd, as well as for Daniel, which is reasonable.

The following considerations make it impossible to regard Esther as a record of actual occurrences.

1. The period implied is that of Xerxes I (see on i. 1), who reigned from 485 to 465. But its second hero, Mordecai, is said to have been one of the exiles taken with Jehoiachin in 597 (ii. 6). This would make Mordecai when he first comes before us in this book some 130 years old and Esther, who won the king's heart by her virgin charms, 70 at least! Rawlinson's way out of this difficulty is not a happy one (see *Speaker's Comm.* on ii. 6).

2. According to this book (i. 12) women and men could not eat together, even in Persia; but we know from ancient historians[2] that this is contrary to fact. The writer transfers the habits of his own time and country to a time and country which do not suit, though for his own immediate purpose it matters little, if anything.

3. Persian history knows nothing of any queen of Xerxes

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[1] See *Tractatus Theol.-Pol.* cap. x.

[2] Her. ix. 110 f., &c.

except one called Amestris, who, though at one time divorced, was afterwards restored.[1]

4. Persian law required that the king should take his wife or wives from one of seven Persian noble families, so that it would have been impossible for Esther, a Jewess, to become a Persian queen.[2]

5. It is very improbable that Esther could for so long a time have concealed her relationship with Mordecai and her Jewish descent from court, king, and people (see on ii. 10).

6. What purpose could be served by keeping the virgin candidates in a kind of quarantine for a whole year? See on ii. 12.

7. It is unlikely, to say the least, that either Haman the Amalekite (see on iii. 1) or Mordecai the Jew should have risen to be the chief ruler in Persia next to Xerxes, and in non-biblical history there is no intimation that anything of the kind took place or could take place.

8. It is improbable that the whole of Susa should have been so deeply stirred by episodes in the history of the Jewish population, and only a Jew could have written iii. 15 and viii. 15, and that with a view to national glorification.

9. In the hundred and twenty provinces of Persia (see on i. 1) and the eighty days' banquet (see on i. 14) we have other examples of the writer's tendency towards exaggerated statements, so as to give piquancy to his tale.

10. That the king should have quite forgotten the benefactor who had saved his life (ii. 21 ff. and vi. 1 ff.) is another of the improbabilities of the book.

## V. UNITY AND INTEGRITY.

With the exception of small parts (words, phrases, and some verses) the whole of the book as it appears in the

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[1] Her. vii. 14; ix. 112.

[2] Ib. iii. 84.

Hebrew is acknowledged to be by one writer as far as ix. 19. Most modern critics regard ix. 20–32 as belonging to a different source: so J. D. Michaelis, Kamphausen, Ryssel, Oettli, König, Wildeboer, Baudissin, and Paton, the latter including, as must be done, x. 1–3. The grounds on which these writers go refer to language and subject-matter.

1. There are in ix. 20 ff. words and expressions not found in the earlier part of the book, and, on the contrary, many words and expressions common in the earlier part are here absent. See an excellent list in Paton, 59 f.

2. As regards the contents, there are items in ix. 20 ff. inconsistent with what has gone before. According to vii. 15 and ix. 14, Haman and his sons were impaled at different times, but ix. 25 seems to mean that they were impaled all at one time. In vi. 12–viii. 2 Esther comes before us as the deliverer of the Jews, but in ix. 25 she is not even mentioned in connexion with the affair. The king's sentence upon Haman in vii. 8 f. and ix. 25 appears to be different and to imply a different source: see further Paton, 57 ff. It must be owned, however, that the contradictions pointed out by recent writers are not very manifest in many cases, and it has to be borne in mind that there are inconsistencies in i–ix. 19, as Paton himself admits[1]. Thus, in ii. 5 Mordecai is one of the captives of 597; in viii. 2, 123 years later, he becomes chief minister of Persia and displays in his policy all the vigour of a young man.

It should be added that ix. 20–x. 3 does not seem very essential to the completeness of the book, and it looks much like an addition made at a later time when Purim was kept by Jews generally during two days.

## VI. Date and Authorship.

The book was written about 130 B.C. The evidence for this is of two kinds, external and internal.

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[1] *Com.* 72.

1. External. Apart from Esther itself we find no earlier reference to Purim than that which occurs in 2 Macc. xv. 36, where we read that Nicanor's day (13th Adar) was followed by Mordecai's day, i.e. Purim. Now this Apocryphal book is not much older than the commencement of the Christian era. In Sir. xliv–xli (date *circa* 180 B.C.) there is a long list of Israel's worthies, but the names of Esther and Mordecai are lacking, almost certainly because the Book of Esther had not been written. A footnote to the Greek Esther says that the book was brought to Egypt in the fourth year of Ptolemy and Cleopatra (i. e. probably Ptolemy Philometor, d. 146). This reference shows that Esther was in circulation by the end of the second century B.C., if not earlier.

Josephus (d. *circa* A.D. 95) was well acquainted with this book and looked upon it as ancient.[1]

2. Internal Evidence. (1) *The style.* Though the author makes a courageous attempt to write in the Hebrew of an earlier time—the time, in fact, of Xerxes I (d. 495)—and avoids some words characteristic of his own day (e.g. the short relative *sh*, &c.), yet the book abounds in late words (Aramaisms, &c.). See the Introductions of Kuenen (Dutch and German) and Driver, and the commentaries of Ber.-Rys., and Paton.

The Hebrew of Esther resembles closely that of Chronicles, Daniel, and especially that of Ecclesiastes, only that as this book is the latest in the O. T. it has some fresh marks of a later date.

(2) *Matter*. The book reflects a period of strong national spirit and pride, a rebound from a feeling of depression and shame which seems to have but recently passed away. Some great victory on the part of the Jews over their foes appears to be at the back of the book and to form a large part of the inspiration of the writer. Such a state of things existed about 130 B.C., at the close of

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[1] *Antiq.* xi. 6.

the Maccabean wars, and this date or one near it has been generally fixed upon by recent scholars. The embittered narrow national sentiment of the book suits no period so well as this one.

The references to Jewish proselytes in viii. 17 and ix. 27 prove that the book could not have been written earlier than the third century B. C.

That the author was a Jew is made evident by the intense nationalism which he displays and also by the excellent Hebrew in which he writes. ii. 5 gives some support to the view that he was a Benjamite. The fact that he makes no reference to Jerusalem, the Temple, sacrifice, or the feasts, goes far to prove that he was not a resident at Jerusalem, or even in Palestine. The Persian words he uses and the Persian complexion which the book bears makes it likely that he had lived long in Persia, though more than that one may not say with any confidence.

## VII. THE FEAST PURIM AND THE WORD 'PUR.'

The present writer has of set purpose held back his necessarily brief discussion of the above points to the close of this Introduction, as he is of opinion that a clear conception of the aim and drift of this book can be obtained without their consideration. Opinions on both these questions have been so numerous and conflicting that they are greatly in danger of hiding the main issue and of confusing the reader. In order to understand the plays of Shakespeare one is not bound to know all or much about the sources which he has used, though for a history of the plays, as for a history of the rise of Esther, a study of sources is unavoidable. For the view of the book which has been given[1] it is necessary to assume that the Feast of Purim is of non-Jewish origin, but that it came to have such vogue among Jews that it could not be got rid of. It was therefore made into a Jewish feast and commended by a romance based on Babylonian (or Persian?) mythology, which served to express and foster the patriotism which recent events had called forth. Many scholars, however, hold that this feast arose for the first time on Jewish ground, most of these holding with J. D. Michaelis, Reuss, &c., that it was instituted to commemorate the victory of Judas Maccabaeus over Nicanor, general of the Syrian army, on the 13th Adar, 161 B.C.[1] Paul Haupt ably and interestingly defends this view in his *Purim*.[2] If, however, the festival had a Jewish origin it must have received a Jewish name. But *Pur* is admittedly not a Hebrew word, and Haupt himself derives it from 'an old Persian equivalent of the Vedic *pûrti* = portion': so *Purim* = portions, gifts (Esther ix. 19, 22). Moreover, no Jew at this period of national awakening and of narrow national zeal would have dreamt of calling in a tale based on heathen mythology to bolster up a native feast.

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[1] p. 296.

The view which commands the strongest support among modern scholars is that which regards Purim as the continuation of the Babylonian New Year's Feast Zagmuk held in the month Nisan (March–April: see on Ezra x. 9, 17). So Zimmern[3], Jensen, Nöldeke, Winckler, and Frazer[4]. Zimmern, following a hint of Lagarde, derived *pur* from the Babylonian *pukhru* ('an assembly'), another name of the above Babylonian feast, so called because on that day the gods, presided over by Marduk, met in assembly to decide by lot the events of the opening year. It is, however, hard to see how *pur* can come from *pukhru*, and Zimmern has now abandoned this etymology[5].

Zimmern further connects the names 'Mordecai' and 'Marduk[6],' and the names 'Esther' and 'Ishtar,' as is now generally done. Jensen has pointed out the interesting coincidence that Marduk and Ishtar are cousins. But it must be admitted that Marduk the god and Mordecai the Jew play very different parts, and it is to be noted that Zagmuk was held in the very beginning of Nisan, *Purim* in the middle of the preceding month.

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[1] See 1 Mac. vii. 40-45; Jos. *Antiq.* xii. 408.

[2] 8vo, pp. 53, Leipzig, 1906.

[3] Stade's *ZATW.* 1891, 157 ff.

[4] *Golden Bough*², iii. p. 151 ff.

[5] See *KAT.*⁽³⁾ 518.

[6] Ib. 395; see on Esther ii. 5.

Jensen has developed the theory of Zimmern still further, making, however, many modifications as well as additions. He holds that in Esther the principal source is Babylonian, but that Elamite mythology has been also drawn upon, and in particular the Gilgameš legend, which Jensen makes the source of most of the tales in the O. T., the *Iliad*, and of even the life of Christ. Hadassah, Esther's other name = the Babylonian *hadashatu*, bride, used as a title for goddesses.

Haman = Humban or Humman, the chief god of the Elamites, in whose chief city, Susa, the events of the book occur (yet Haman was no god!). Vashti is connected with the Mashti or Vashti of the Elamite inscriptions. Other names in the book are similarly explained. Jensen derives *Pur* from a hypothetical Babylonian *puru* or *buru* = 'a stone,' then (but what proof is there of this?) 'a lot'; but we now know that the word should be read *barti*.

Bruno Meissner[1], adopting most of what Zimmern says, holds that we have at the basis of Esther an Ishtar, not a Marduk legend.

Lagarde traces the Purim Feast to the Persian All-Saints Festival held in honour of the departed, and the word *pur* to the Persian name of that Feast of the Dead, *Farwardigân*. In this etymology he was, however, anticipated by von Hammer in 1872,[2] and even by that rare English theologian and Orientalist, Thomas Hyde (d. 1703), who assisted Walton in his Polyglot, and wrote a very learned work in Latin on the 'Religion of the Ancient Persians.' But this derivation has been proved to be philologically impossible[1], and Lagarde himself gave it up in later years in favour of an etymology (the Mandaic *puhrâ*, meal) said to be akin to that afterwards adopted by Hommel and Zimmern[2] (*pukhru*, 'a festive assembly').

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[1] *ZDMG.* 1896, p. 266, &c.

[2] *Wien. Jahrb. für Lit.*

Schwally[3] accepts Zimmern's former etymology *pukhru*, but with it combines Lagarde's identification of the feasts Purim and the Persian Farwardigân. In both there is feasting, in the latter the dead being supposed to share (cf. Jer. xvi. 7); in both presents were exchanged. With Schwally, as later with Jensen, the descent of Gilgameš into the lower world suggested the doctrine of the resurrection[4]. The absence of Divine names from the book is to be attributed (Schwally thinks) to the unwillingness of Jewish scholars to admit the book into the Canon unless the name of God was left out of a composition admittedly based on the cult of ancestors.

Grätz's theory of a Greek origin for Purim (= Pithorgia) and his Hebrew etymology of the word (*purah*, 'winepress,' so previously J. D. Michaelis) have found no followers.

For full and excellent discussions of the whole question see Introductions to the commentaries of Wildeboer and Paton, and the monographs by Paul Haupt (already mentioned), Wilhelm Erbt, *Die Purimsage in der Bibel* (Berlin, 1900), and (from the Jewish conservative point of view) Sigmund Jampel, *Die Beurteilung des Estherbuches und des Purimfestes* (Pressburg, 1905).

For interesting accounts of the mediaeval and modern observance of Purim see I. Abraham's *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, p. 260 ff. (he calls it the Jewish Carnival), *Jewish Encyc.* 'Purim,' and *The Home and Synagogue of the Modern Jew*, p. 139 ff. The thirteenth day is observed as a fast. On the fourteenth the Roll of Esther is read. The fifteenth is kept as a very merry day, many excesses (drinking, &c.) being often indulged in.

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[1] See Haupt, *op. cit.* p. 21.

[2] *ZATW*. 1891, 157 ff.

[3] *Das Leben nach dem Tode* (1892), p. 42-5.

[4] See this matter ably discussed by Orr, *The Resurrection of Jesus*, 242 ff.

For list of abbreviations see pp. 35 ff.

## LITERATURE.

The following is a list of the important exegetical works on Esther used by the author, most of them referred to in the notes. The present writer has consulted many other works, ancient and modern, though in every case he has tried to give his own judgement after consulting the text, versions, Targums, &c.

The commentaries by the following include Esther as well as Ezra-Nehemiah (see p. 36):—

Adeney, W. F., Bertheau and Ber.-Rys., Kamphausen, Keil, Oettli, Rawlinson, F. W. Schultz, Siegfried.

Note besides commentaries on Esther by the following:—

Cassel, D.: Trans. by A. Bernstein.
Haley, J. W. (and others): Many useful hints and references.
Paton, L. B. (T. & T. Clark): The most up-to-date commentary existing and the fullest in English, though the writer withholds his own opinion too much or it is lost in the details of other opinions.
Scholz, A. (German): Contains a great mass of materials, but very fanciful in its interpretations.
Streane, A. W.: *Camb. Bible*, short but good and reliable.
Wildeboer, D. G. (German): Brief but scholarly.

The following new and suggestive essay came into the author's hands as the proofs of the present work were being corrected:—*Le Prologue—Cadre des Mille et Une Nuits: Les Légendes perses et Le Livre d'Esther*, par J. Cosquin, Paris, 1909: see p. 363.

# THE BOOK OF ESTHER

1 Now it came to pass in the days of [a] Ahasuerus, (this is

[a] Or, *Xerxes* Heb. *Ahashverosh.*

[Apoc. Esther xi. 2–xii. 6. Mordecai's dream; the manner in which he secured the king's favour.][1]

CH. I. THE KING MAKES TWO BANQUETS (1–8) AND THE QUEEN ONE (9). THE QUEEN PUT AWAY FOR HER DISOBEDIENCE TO THE KING (10–22).

1–4. *The king's banquet for his officials.*

**1. Now it came to pass:** the Hebrew for this is that usually translated 'And it came to pass,' and it implies generally a connexion with something preceding. It suitably begins the historical books Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Nehemiah, since such a connexion exists, but this is not the case in the first verse of Ruth, Ezekiel, Jonah, or in the present verse. In fact 'waw consecutive' construction became in course of time a tense form pure and simple, and it should be here so regarded. Render therefore, 'It came to pass,' &c. In non-Semitic languages, including classical (not Hellenistic, but cf. the views of Deissmann, Thumb and Moulton) Greek, the main verb would not be thus introduced. Arab., Heb., &c., instead of saying 'And Jesus spake' would prefer, 'And it came to pass that Jesus spake.'

**Ahasuerus:** though the LXX, Jos., render Artaxerxes (see Ezra iv. 7) no other king than Xerxes (485–465 B. C.) can be meant. This has been generally admitted by scholars from a comparison of what is said in Herodotus, &c., and in this book. Of no other Persian king could the author of Esther write as he does of the king mentioned in this verse. The question has, however, been finally set at rest by the deciphering of the trilingual inscriptions of Behistun, in the Babylonian column of which the name of this king appears in a form differing very little from the Hebrew (*Akhashwerosh*), here transliterated Ahasuerus: see on Ezra iv. 6.

**this is Ahasuerus,** &c.: added to distinguish him from others with the same name.

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[1] The Apocryphal additions occur in the LXX where in this Commentary the passages are mentioned as above in square brackets.

Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia,
over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces :) that 2
in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne
of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the [a]palace, in the 3
third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his
princes and his servants ; the power of Persia and Media,

[a] Or, *castle*

**from India . . . Ethiopia, an hundred and seven and twenty provinces :** so viii. 9, Apoc. Esther xiii. 1, xvi. 1, and (of Darius Hystaspis) 1 Esd. iii. 2. **India** (Heb. *Hoddu*, from the Old Pers.) denotes here, as in classical geography, the territory watered by the seven streams of the Indus (whence it gets its name) and not the entire peninsula now so called. **Ethiopia** (Heb. *Kush*) stands for Nubia.

**over :** omit ; it is not in the Heb. The following words are simply an explanation of **from India even unto Ethiopia.**

The phrase **an hundred and seven and twenty provinces** (see the other examples of its use) is a gross exaggeration, exceeded, however, by Josephus, who says[1] that Darius the Mede exercised rule over 360 provinces, though in the present passage he agrees with the M. T. According to Dan. vi. 2 the kingdom of Darius the Mede contained 120 provinces. Herodotus[2], on the other hand, says that Darius divided his kingdom into 20 satrapies, and contemporary Darius inscriptions confirm this. It is quite possible that we are here, as certainly in Ezra ii. 1, Neh. vii. 6, to understand sub-satrapies. But we have no non-biblical confirmation of such usage except in Josephus, who follows the O.T. almost exclusively.

**2. Shushan the palace :** better, 'Susa the fortress.' In ix the fortified part of Susa (ver. 7) is distinguished from the rest of Susa (ver. 15) ; see on ii. 5 and on Neh. i. 2.

**3. in the third year :** i. e. in 483.

**feast :** lit. 'a drinking meal,' 'a symposium,' because drinking wine, &c., formed the principal part. But (see on v. 4) what was the purpose of so representative a banquet ? No one knows, though many guesses have been made.

**princes :** render, 'officials' (see on Ezra ix. 1). Government officials are meant.

**servants :** members of the royal court, stewards, and the

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[1] *Antiq.* x. 11. 5 ; lit., 'He (Daniel) was one of the three satraps whom he (Darius the Mede) appointed over the 360 satrapies.'

[2] iii. 89.

the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before
4 him: when he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom
and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, even
5 an hundred and fourscore days. And when these days
were fulfilled, the king made a feast unto all the people
that were present in Shushan the palace, both great and
small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's

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like, courtiers (see iii. 21, iv. 11, v. 11; 1 Kings v. 15; Jer. xxxvi. 24, &c.).

**the power of Persia,** &c.: read (with Ryss., Buhl, &c.), '(servants) and the officers of the army of Persia,' &c. The words corresponding to 'and the officers of' have fallen out by haplography.

**Persia and Media:** a Medo-Persian kingdom was founded by Cyaxares the Mede (635-584). In 549 Cyrus the Persian became head of what came to be known as the equivalent of Perso-Media or Persia and Media.

**nobles:** the word in the M. T. is a Hebrew form of the Persian = 'first men.' The members of the aristocracy are meant.

**4.** Render, 'When he showed (them) his glorious royal wealth and the costliness (lit. 'preciousness') of his majesty's apparel.'

**an hundred and fourscore days:** not, of course, to be understood literally—it is part of the romance. No banquet could last so long which had in it so many government functionaries from all parts of the known world. Clericus tries to evade the difficulty by imagining that the guests partook of the banquet in successive batches, but there is no hint of that here.

5-8. *The king's banquet for non-official residents and visitors*—**the people,** &c. It is possible, and is usually taken for granted, that the participants in the first banquet shared also in this, but it seems to the present writer improbable.

**5. that were present:** the Heb. (='that could be found') includes visitors as well as residents (see on Ezra viii. 25).

**in the court,** &c.: in the enclosed court paved with mosaic which (court) formed part of the park or 'paradise' surrounding the royal palace (see Xen. *Cyro.* i. 3, 12, 14).

**6.** The text is evidently very corrupt, and every critical editor has his own way of restoring (?) it. The following rendering involves changes which are few and for the most part vouched for in the versions: 'The awnings were of blue cotton fastened' (the participle, though singular, may in good Hebrew qualify 'awn-

palace; *there were hangings of* [a]white *cloth*, *of* [b]green, and 6
*of* blue, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to
silver rings and pillars of marble: the couches were of
gold and silver, upon a pavement [c]of red, and white, and
yellow, and black marble. And they gave them drink in 7
vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from
another,) and royal wine in abundance, according to the
[d]bounty of the king. And the drinking was according 8

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[a] Or, *fine* cloth, *white and blue* [b] Or, *cotton*
[c] Or, *of porphyry, and white marble, and alabaster, and stone of blue colour* [d] Heb. *hand.*

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ings') 'by purple linen cords' (omit 'and' before 'purple') 'to silver rings (or rods?) and (to) white marble pillars.'

**white *cloth*:** Heb. (one word) 'whiteness.' Read, 'awnings,' the Heb. word for the latter (*y^e^ri'oth*) could be easily read for that in the M. T. in a blurred copy.

***of* green:** the word in the M.T. is Persian and means 'cotton.'

**and** (*of* blue): omit and and join 'cotton' to 'blue,' 'cotton of blue' = (in Heb. idiom) 'blue (or purple) cotton.'

**rings:** this rendering is supported by Cant. v. 14 (where alone the word occurs besides here), by the etymology and by the sense. There were rings attached to the marble pillars, and to these the linen cords were fastened. The awnings would serve to keep off the intense heat and blaze of the sun.

**couches:** i. e. divans on which the ancient Persians reclined during meals. The custom, though not originally a Hebrew one, existed among the Hebrews in the eighth century B.C. (see Amos vi. 4), and in later times was universal among the Jews. It is still usual in Palestine, &c. The couches were made of solid gold and silver, not merely covered with cloth of gold and silver. Herodotus speaks of gold and silver couches and tables among the Persians.

**upon a pavement:** render, 'upon a mosaic pavement of alabaster and white marble and mother-of-pearl and black marble.' The words characterizing the pavement are names of materials, not of colours, though there is uncertainty as to what exactly some of the terms denote as they occur nowhere else in the O. T.

**7. the vessels being diverse:** this was the case on very grand occasions. In banquets depicted on the monuments the vessels are uniform in size, shape, and material.

(according to the) **bounty:** lit. 'hand,' i. e. means of the king. So ii. 18; 1 Kings x. 13; cf. Neh. ii. 8.

to the law; none could compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should
9 do according to every man's pleasure. Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women in the royal house
10 which belonged to king Ahasuerus. On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven [a] chamberlains

[a] Or, *eunuchs* (and so in ver. 12, &c.)

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**8.** (according to) **the law:** i. e. that made for the present occasion. The ancient Persians are known from Herodotus and others to have been heavy drinkers, and at banquets each guest was expected to drink at least a certain minimum quantity. During this feast there was perfect freedom on the matter.

**9.** *Vashti's banquet for the women*: why this separate women's feast, for in Xerxes' time women in Persia could eat and drink with men? It was hardly, as some suppose, because there was no room: perhaps the writer unconsciously projects into the picture drawn the customs of his own country and time.

**Vashti**: Xerxes' wife according to Herodotus[1] was Amestris, which may be the same word varied by phonetic changes and in part by corruption. Jensen identifies the name with that of the Elamite Vashti (or Mashti): see p. 303.

**royal house**: lit., 'house of the kingdom.' The women's banquet was held in a part of the palace proper, as was perhaps that of the officials (ver. 3 ff.).

10–12. *Vashti refuses to appear before the guests as the king desires.*

**10. seventh day**: i.e. of the banquet, when the heart of the king was merry with wine. These words are intended to account for the foolish request of the king.

**Mehuman**, &c.: the spelling of these seven names varies much in the MSS. and versions, and their etymology is very uncertain, as perhaps they were borne by men of several nationalities.

**the seven** (chamberlains): on the sacred number 'seven' see on Ezra vii. 14, and cf. ver. 14.

**chamberlains**: render, 'eunuchs' here and in ver. 12, &c. In Persia, Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Palestine, &c., men-servants who had to wait on women or to have access to them needed to be eunuchs, as is the case in the modern Orient.

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[1] vii. 61.

that ministered in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,
to bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown 11
royal, to shew the peoples and the princes her beauty:
for she was fair to look on. But the queen Vashti 12
refused to come at the king's commandment by the
chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and
his anger burned in him. Then the king said to the 13
wise men, which knew the times, (for so was the king's
manner toward all that knew law and judgement; and the 14
next unto him was Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish,
Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of

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**that ministered:** LXX 'who were deacons,' i. e. servants.

**11. the crown** (royal): the word in the M.T. (*kether*) occurs here and in ii. 17 of what the queen wore and in vi. 8 of what was placed on the king's horse. It occurs nowhere else in the O.T. Probably it is the Heb. form of the Persian *kidaris*, a tall, stiff, bejewelled cap worn by Persian kings on the ancient monuments. The usual word for crown is found in viii. 15 for what Mordecai wore. See Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains* (5), p. 320, n. †.

13–22. *The wise men consulted by the king advise him to put Vashti away.*

13–15. *The king consults his wise men, showing that there was no law dealing with the conduct of the queen.*

**13. wise men:** usually explained as embracing (1) astrologers (see Dan. ii. 27, v. 15), men 'who knew the times,' and (2) those who understood the principles and practice of equity (who 'knew law and judgement'), i. e. those who sought guidance from the Supreme Mind as He revealed it in the heavenly bodies, and those who decided from their knowledge and experience of men's way. But one class only is suggested by the words and by the context, the alternate descriptions being due merely to parallelism. Those who took knowledge of the times understood the principles and customs of the law courts.

**for so,** &c.: render, 'for so was the king's business brought before all that knew,' &c.

**14.** Of the wise men mentioned in ver. 13, seven stood nearest the king, constituting, in fact, his privy council.

**Carshena,** &c.: the exact spelling of these seven names is uncertain, as the text is corrupt and MSS. and versions differ: see on ver. 10.

**seven** (princes): see on Ezra vii. 14, and cf. ver. 10.

Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, and sat
15 first in the kingdom :) What shall we do unto the queen
Vashti according to law, because she hath not done the
bidding of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?
16 And Memucan answered before the king and the princes,
Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only,
but also to all the princes, and to all the peoples that are
17 in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus. For this
deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, to
make their husbands contemptible in their eyes, when it
shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded
Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she
18 came not. And this day shall the princesses of Persia
and Media which have heard of the deed of the queen
[a]say *the like* unto all the king's princes. So *shall there*
19 *arise* [b]much contempt and wrath. If it please the king,

[a] Or, *tell* it [b] Or, *enough*

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16–20. *What the wise men advised.* Memucan seems to be the spokesman for the whole body.

**16.** Vashti had wronged the king and set a dangerous example to his subjects.

**17. to make,** &c.: render (more literally), 'so that it will make them (the women) despise their husbands in their eyes, as they (the women) say, the king,' &c.

**husbands:** the word = 'owner,' 'master,' and well suits the connexion. It occurs also in Gen. xx. 3; Deut. xxiv. 4; Hos. ii. 15. The common Hebrew word for husband is *ish* = Latin *vir*, Greek *aner*.

**when . . . reported:** the Hebrew may as in the E.VV. be understood impersonally or as in above rendering personally. The irregularity of the suffix in the latter case will give no Hebraist the least trouble.

**18. say:** the verb has no expressed object, but the context makes it quite clear that the incident of Vashti's refusal is intended to be so understood: 'Shall . . . say (about this) to all,' &c.

**princes:** see on ver. 3.

**So** *shall*, &c.: read, making a slight change in the Heb., 'and whenever (on the part of the wife) there is contempt there is (on the part of the husband) wrath.'

**19. If it please:** see on Neh. ii. 5.

let there go forth a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, [a] that it be not altered, that Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate [b] unto another that is better than she. And when the king's decree which he shall make 20
shall be published throughout all his kingdom, (for it is great,) all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small. And the saying pleased the 21
king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan: for he sent letters into all the 22
king's provinces, into every province according to

[a] Heb. *that it pass not away.* [b] Heb. *unto her companion.*

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**unto another**: the translation is quite correct, the R.Vm. 'Heb. **unto her companion**' being inaccurate. The same noun in its masc. form occurs in the idiom '(we must love) each the other.'

**20. great and small**: i. e. men of all ranks of society.

21 f. *The king follows out the advice given him.*

**22. letters**: better 'dispatches,' as the former word suggests much that is not meant. The Heb. noun is generally translated 'book' (books), see ii. 23; Neh. viii. 1, &c.; 'books' and 'dispatches' (letters) differed then almost exclusively in size only.

Persia had in the time of Xerxes (who, according to Herodotus [1], founded it) an excellent postal service which made use of couriers (Heb. 'runners,' see iii. 13) and horses (viii. 10). In Palestine and other mountainous countries the couriers (fleet footmen) were principally used, but in level countries and especially for great distances these couriers rode on swift horses, making journeys off the main road on foot. In Jer. xii. 5 there is a reference to the quicker movement of the horses as compared with the footmen. Jer. li. 31 suggests that at the time implied a courier-post was all that existed in Babylon. It should be remembered, however, that the ancient Persian postal system, fully described by Herodotus [1] and Xenophon [2], was used exclusively by the king and the government. The poorer people had no official mode of communication.

**province**: see on ver. 7 and cf. p. 55.

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[1] viii. 98. [2] *Cyr.* viii. 6, § 17.

the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, that every man should bear rule in his own house, and should publish it according to the language of his people.

**2** After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was pacified, he remembered Vashti, and what she had
2 done, and what was decreed against her. Then said the

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**writing . . . language,** &c: in the dispatches various scripts (Arabic, Aramaic, Assyrian, Hebrew, Greek—all different) as well as languages would have to be used. Had Xerxes in his court scribes capable of all this? Trilingual inscriptions have, however, been discovered in Persia. But there is reason for believing that Aramaic was the *lingua franca* of the western portions of the Persian dominions at that time: cf. the recently found Aramaic papyri. It should be added that in parts of modern Persia and Russia postal arrangements are much the same as is implied in this book, only not so 'up to date!'

**every man should bear rule,** &c.: woman has always held a low place in the East, though to a less degree among the ancient Persians.

**and should publish:** render, 'and should speak,' &c., the meaning of which appears to be that the language of the husband must be that of the home, so that his wife, if a foreigner, must learn and speak it. But it is better (with Hitzig and most moderns) to read 'and should speak (= order) what he pleases.' See on iii. 12.

ii. 1–18. ESTHER CHOSEN QUEEN INSTEAD OF VASHTI.

1–4. *The king, on the advice of his courtiers resolves to select a successor to Vashti from virgins to be brought from all parts of his dominions.*

**1. was pacified:** Heb. 'had subsided'; so vii. 10. The verb = 'to sink,' and occurs in Gen. viii. 1 ('and the waters *abated*').

**he remembered Vashti:** with remorse for what he had done and with renewed affection. He was evidently minded, if possible, to take her back. Many ways of evading this, the natural sense, have been proposed. The LXX inserts the negative ('remembered *not*').

**2.** The courtiers wished to make the king's resolve irrevocable, as they had counselled the rejection of Vashti. Hence they propound their scheme for securing another queen.

Why did not the king forthwith raise to the now vacant queenship one of his concubines (see ver. 14) or another wife—if he had one?

king's servants that ministered unto him, Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king: and let the king 3
appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody of [a] Hegai the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given them: and let the maiden which pleaseth the king 4
be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

[a] Heb. *Hege*.

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**king's servants**: see on i. 3.

**3. officers**: the Heb. noun is cognate with the verb which governs it ('let the king *appoint men appointed*'), and in Neh. xi. 9 (see on) is translated 'overseer.' In Nehemiah the LXX has *episcopos* (our 'bishop'), but in the present passage *komarkhas*, or 'village chiefs,' is the Greek word used.

**provinces**: see on i. 1.

**virgins**: this specification was more needful then, and in the East is still, than with us.

**Shushan the palace**: see on i. 2 and especially on Neh. i. 2.

**house of the women**: the harem or *gunaikeion*, situated (as recent excavations go to show) at the north-west of the complex of royal buildings. In ver. 8 it is called the 'king's house,' an expression which in ver. 9 and iv. 13 stands for the palace buildings as a whole, though in ii. 13 and v. 1 it denotes the king's private apartments.

**Hegai**: in the Hebrew we have in this chapter two spellings for this name, Hege and Hegai. The latter is correct.

**chamberlain**: i. e. eunuch (see on i. 10). Hegai could not have had access to these women nor Shaashgaz to the concubines (ver. 14) had they not been eunuchs.

**things for purification**: lit. 'things to rub with,' i. e. cosmetics, specified in ver. 12. These had to be applied for a whole year before the several candidates presented themselves for the royal hand (see ver. 12), as if twelve months could do more than twelve days or even hours towards the desired end (attractiveness).

**4. and let the maiden . . . be queen**: on the improbability of such a method of choosing a queen see Introd., p. 298.

5 There was a certain Jew in Shushan the palace, whose
name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei,
6 the son of Kish, a Benjamite; who had been carried
away from Jerusalem with the captives which had been

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5–7. *Short account of Mordecai and his cousin Esther.* This section is introduced here because the story cannot go further forward without it. In the Hebrew, where connexion is generally indicated (by 'waw-consecutive,' &c.), there is nothing joining this paragraph with what precedes, suggesting that we have something brought in *ab extra*, though this conclusion is not inevitable.

**5. a Jew in Shushan the palace:** there must have been a goodly number of Jews resident in the fortified part of Susa (ix. 7) as well as in the city itself (ix. 15). Some would belong to the army, some would be in business (for the fortress quarters must have contained business houses), while others would act as artisans, servants, &c. 'The palace' is a very inaccurate and misleading translation.

**Mordecai:** usually explained as = 'a devotee of the (Babylonian) god Marduk' (= Merodach)[1]. This does not mean, however, that every man so called is what the name implies, for it was and is a frequent name among Jews. Every man called 'Thomas' is not a twin, nor is every one called 'Fisher' what the name implies.

**the son of Jair,** &c.: the word *ben* rendered 'son' means here as often (see on Ezra vii. 1) descendant, certainly in the case of Shimei, David's bitter foe (2 Sam. xvi. 5 ff.), and Kish the father of Saul (1 Sam. ix. 1, &c.), who are remote ancestors of Mordecai, as was also, perhaps, Jair. It is perhaps hinted that as Saul conquered Agag (1 Sam. xv) so his descendant Mordecai would compass the ruin of Haman the Agagite (iii. 1). Rawlinson and many others hold that the father, grandfather, and great-grandfather are meant, but the coincidence of the two latter names tells against this.

**a Benjamite:** referring, according to Hebrew usage, directly to Mordecai, though for that reason applicable to the other names.

**6. who had been,** &c.: the word can belong to Mordecai only, as he is the main subject of verses 5 f. But in this verse the writer is guilty of an anachronism, for Jeconiah (= Jehoiachin, 2 Kings xxiv. 4) and his fellow exiles were removed to Babylon in 598, 115 years before the period implied in the present context. For the real purpose of the story, however, this error makes no difference, though it is an artistic flaw. No doubt, in the mind of the writer, this Mordecai is identical with the man of that name mentioned in Ezra ii. 2 (see on) and Neh. vii. 7: so both Targums here.

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[1] See p. 302.

carried away with [a] Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. And he [b] brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's 7
daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maiden was fair and beautiful; and when her father and mother were dead, Mordecai took her for his own daughter. So it came to pass, when the king's command- 8
ment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was taken into the king's

[a] In 2 Kings xxiv. 6, *Jehoiachin.* [b] Heb. *nourished.*

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**Nebuchadnezzar:** more correct would be *Nebuchodonnozor* (Haupt, cf. LXX and Babylonian). The older form (Jeremiah, Ezekiel) is *Nebuchadrezzar* (see Jer. xlix. 28, &c.); see on Ezra ii. 1.

**7. he brought up:** lit. 'he was foster-father to.' The same Heb. noun occurs in Num. xi. 12; Isa. xlix. 23.

**Hadassah, that is, Esther:** the names are explained largely, especially by the older authors, as denoting respectively 'myrtle' and 'star' (cf. Greek *aster*). Why in that case she received these names, and which of them is the original one, has been much disputed (see Ber.-Rys., and Paton). The latest scholars hold that we have the original of Esther in the name of the Babylonian goddess Ishtar (cf. Ashtoreth), and that 'Hadassah' is merely a Babylonian title for this goddess: see Introd., p. 302 f.

**his uncle's daughter:** Mordecai and Esther were therefore cousins. The fact that they lived in such close relations—for he treated her as a daughter—has led many to think that Mordecai was a eunuch. If he was, this would explain the ease with which he gained access to the harem, and the fact that we never read of his wife; it would also go well with the view that he was a palace official (see on ver. 21).

**fair:** Heb. 'beautiful of form.'

**beautiful:** Heb. 'good looking'; lit. 'good as regards appearance.'

8–11. *Esther's entrance into the palace and the favourable impression she made.*

**8.** This verse (cf. ver. 3) takes up the thread of the narrative dropped for the purpose of bringing in verses 5–7.

**was taken:** the Heb. verb is the regular one for marrying a woman (Gen. iv. 19, vi. 2, &c.), and has in it no hint at the use of compulsion, though according to both Targums and Apoc. Esther

house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.
9 And the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness
of him; and he speedily gave her her things for purification,
with her portions, and the seven maidens, which
were meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and
he removed her and her maidens to the best place of
10 the house of the women. Esther had not shewed her
people nor her kindred: for Mordecai had charged her that

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xiv. 15, 18, Esther had been forced against her will into the royal harem. The natural impression which the O.T. story gives is that the two cousins are consenting parties all through, and rejoice exceedingly at Esther's success when she wins the queenship. All this, as also the fact that she eats the food of the heathen—for her nationality is kept a secret—prove that the Judaism of Mordecai and Esther are of a much less stringent type than, say, that of Ezra and Nehemiah, who did so much to put down marriages with aliens.

**9. maiden:** i. e. Esther.

**pleased him:** i. e. more than her rivals.

**and he:** i. e. the king, though he acted through his courtiers.

**speedily** (gave): so that her year of preparation might the sooner expire (see ver. 12).

**things for purification:** see on ver. 3.

**portions:** each virgin received not only cosmetics to perfume and beautify, but also special diet (see Dan. i. 5), though the special dieting is not mentioned in ver. 12. Esther does not seem to have made any objection to the food, though it could not have been such as Jewish laws permitted.

**the** (seven maidens) that each candidate had for attendants. Seven maidens each is implied in the use of the definite article.

**meet:** lit. 'seen'; then 'looked out,' and so 'selected.'

**the king's house:** here = palace complex, as in iv. 13. See on ii. 3.

**10. Esther had not shewed** (O.E. = reported, disclosed) her people (= nationality), **nor her kindred** (= family, and in particular her relationship to Mordecai).

To have been known as Jewish must at the time implied, if not at the time of writing, have meant some disadvantages. But to have concealed these things from the king, the eunuchs, and her rivals required extraordinary adroitness, but, if true, exhibit but little steadfastness of principle on the part of Esther or her cousin. See on verses 8 f. and on vi. 10.

she should not shew it. And Mordecai walked every 11
day before the court of the women's house, to know how
Esther did, and what should become of her. Now 12
when the turn of every maiden was come to go in to king
Ahasuerus, after that it had been done to her according
to the law for the women, twelve months, (for so were
the days of their purifications accomplished, *to wit*, six
months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet
odours, and with the things for the purifying of the
women,) then in this wise came the maiden unto the king, 13

**11. walked:** Heb. 'used to walk.'

**before:** i.e. on the eastern side of the court: see on Neh. xii. 31. Perhaps at the time of the rising of the sun each day the inmates of the palace, male and female, would congregate for purpose of worship on the sunrise side of the royal buildings. The two cousins might thus easily meet daily, though silently recoiling from the sun-worship around. Mordecai's anxiety to learn of the state and prospects of his cousin must have been great. One must not imagine that among the Persians in those days the relations between the sexes was so strictly guarded as in the modern Orient.

12–15. *How the king made the selection.*

The candidates passed in turns (how the order was settled we do not know) night by night into the king's room, just as was done by the wives of Pseudo-Smerdis[1], with which and with the present narrative compare the Introduction to the *Arabian Nights*, the tale of Shahriar[2].

**12. twelve months:** as if a year's perfuming, &c., could effect more for the beautifying of the virgins than say that of twelve hours!

**myrrh:** Heb. *mōr*, the same word.

**sweet odours**: Heb. *bosem* (in the plural), i.e. 'balsam' (with inserted 'l').

**and** (with the things) = 'even,' the words that follow merely summing up the cosmetics aforementioned.

ver. 13 joins on to the beginning of ver. 12, repeated here after the interruption following 12$^a$. Render, '12 Now whenever the turn of each girl was to go in to the king, &c. 13 Even (when) in this (her turn) the girl came to the king, whatever she used to

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[1] Herod. iii. 69. [2] See Additional Notes, p. 363.

whatsoever she desired was given her to go with her out
14 of the house of the women unto the king's house. In the
evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into
the second house of the women, to the custody of
Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, which kept the
concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except
the king delighted in her, and that she were called by
15 name. Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of
Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for
his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she
required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain,
the keeper of the women, appointed. And Esther
obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked
16 upon her. So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into
his house royal in the tenth month, which is the month
17 Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. And the

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demand (cosmetics, jewellery, &c.) it was the custom to give her to take (lit. enter) with her out of,' &c. Each girl was helped in every way to make herself as winsome as she could.

Note in ver. 13 the explicit differentiation between the house of the women and that of the king. See on ver. 3 and on v. 1.

**14.** On the morning each candidate had to leave the king's room and to pass into the concubines' department, not repeating her visit to the king unless specially requested. In the *Arabian Nights*' tale each maid had to be killed in the morning.

**Shaashgaz:** Haupt says we should read 'Shashegaz.'

**chamberlain:** render 'eunuch': see on ver. 3 and i. 10.

**15.** Esther's personal charms were so great, and she was so conscious of them (or was it her modesty?) that she desired no special aid to recommend her to the king.

**Abihail:** in LXX here and ix. 29 Aminadab (=Abinadab).

16–18. *Esther chosen as queen.*

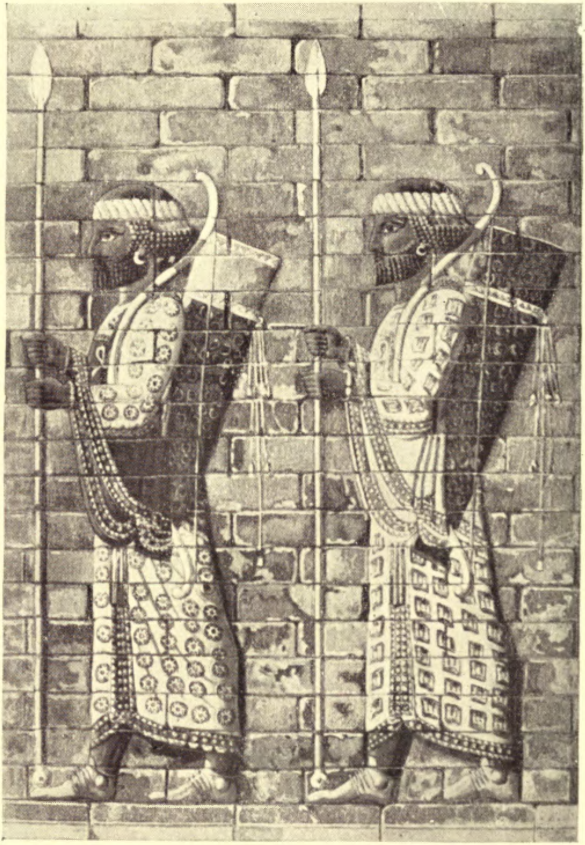
**16. was taken:** i. e. as wife (so Targ.(1)): see on ver. 8.

**his house royal:** lit. 'the house of his kingdom'=the house of the king in ver. 13.

**the tenth month:** i.e. Dec.-Jan.: see on Ezra x. 16.

**Tebeth:** a Babylonian name, nowhere else mentioned in the O.T.

**in the seventh year:** i.e. in 478, four years after Vashti's



Shushan the Palace.
(Archers' Frieze).

king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti. Then the king made a 18 great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast; and he made a [a] release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the [b] bounty of the king. And when the virgins were gathered together the second 19

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[a] Heb. *rest*. [b] Heb. *hand*.

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deposition (i. 3). It was during this period that Xerxes conducted his ill-starred expedition into Greece, the battle of Salamis taking place in 480. Some ascribe the delay in making the selection to this expedition. The writer, however, viewing those years in the distance, sees nothing going on in Susa but this continual testing of virgins. We must remember that we are reading a romance and not strict history.

**17. above all the women:** i. e. above the concubines (and wives?) already in the harem and the virgins who were Esther's rivals.

**crown:** see on i. 12.

**18. a great feast:** Josephus says 'a wedding feast.' Great events were celebrated and distinguished persons honoured by banquets then as now.

**release:** Heb., 'a causing to rest' (the root in the Heb. for *Noah*), but from what? Probably from prison (see 1 Macc. x. 33; Matt. xxvii. 15), not from taxes (1 Macc. x. 29), which in Persia were unknown, nor from military service (as LXX, Targ. (1) assume).

**gifts:** the Hebrew is singular, though it may bear a plural sense. The same word in Jer. xl. 5 is translated 'present'; in Amos v. 11 it means 'tribute,' which may be its sense here, 'he gave (back) the tribute,' though Persian custom is against this.

**bounty:** see on i. 7.

19–23. *Mordecai exposes a plot to take the king's life.*

**19.** Render, 'And when the virgins were being gathered together, then Mordecai,' &c., referring back to ver. 8.

**the second time:** omit. The one Hebrew word so translated was inserted from a view of the passage which assumed that another assembly of girls took place in addition to that spoken of in verses 8 ff. We have, however, in verses 19–23 an episode which took place while the virgins were being brought in (verses 8 ff.). Haupt omits the verse on account of its difficulty,

20 time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate. Esther had
not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai
had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of
Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.
21 In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two
of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those
which kept the [a]door, were wroth, and sought to lay hands
22 on the king Ahasuerus. And the thing was known to
Mordecai, who shewed it unto Esther the queen; and
23 Esther told the king *thereof* in Mordecai's name. And

[a] Heb. *threshold.*

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and if the words 'the second time' are kept, Haupt's suggestion is the only possible one.

**the king's gate:** a favourite resort of Mordecai's (see ver. 21, &c.). It stood probably at the entrance to the palace grounds, and, like city gates in the East commonly, it was a place of public resort and perhaps the place where justice was administered. Some infer, from the fact that Mordecai is often mentioned in connexion with it, that he was a government official (see on ver. 7 and cf. vi. 10).

**20. Esther had not yet,** &c.: a more literal rendering would be, 'Esther was not one that declared,' &c., i. e. during these proceedings she used to keep silent about, &c.

**shewed . . . kindred:** see on ver. 10.

**21. In those days:** i. e. while the girls were being brought (verses 8 ff. and 19).

**chamberlains:** render, 'eunuchs': see on i. 10.

**Bigthan:** called in i. 10 'Bigtha' and in vi. 2 'Bigthana.'

**door:** Heb. 'threshold.' These two men had apparently charge of the king's sleeping-room, and could easily compass his death. According to both Targs., the plan hit upon was to put a venomous reptile in the king's cup when he was about to drink. As a matter of fact, this Xerxes lost his life in 465 through a conspiracy of the kind, as did also Artaxerxes III (Ochus) in 338.

**were wroth:** why? No one knows, though the Targumists, commentators, &c., offer innumerable explanations: see Berth., Ryss., and Paton.

**to lay hands on:** i. e. to put to death: so iii. 6, ix. 2.

**22. was known:** better, 'came to be known.' How? We are not told, though here again many surmises have been offered.

**shewed:** see on ver. 10.

**in Mordecai's name:** if the queen mentioned her cousin's when inquisition was made of the matter, and it was found to be so, they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman 3

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name when disclosing the affair to the king—and the words can mean nothing else—how could the king have so soon forgotten all about it, especially as Persian kings were proverbial for the way in which they rewarded outstanding merit among their soldiers?

**23. hanged**: better 'impaled' (so Streane, Haupt, &c.), this being the mode of capital punishment prevalent in Persia at the time[1]: cf. 'on a tree'; see on Ezra vi. 11. Death by hanging or strangulation is but twice mentioned in the Bible, and in both cases as a mode of suicide: see 2 Sam. xvii. 23 and Matt. xxvii. 5; cf. Nahum ii. 13, where the same Hebrew verb occurs as in the former passage. According to Joseph., Jero., and perhaps the Syr., 'crucified' is the proper translation, but this was the Roman mode of capital punishment. Paton defends the ordinary rendering **hanged**, relying chiefly on v. 14 (see on). But up to the present (1909) no example has been seen on the ancient monuments of Babylon, Assyria, or Persia, of hanging by the neck or of fastening to a cross.

**the book of the chronicles**: the Hebrew name for the canonical 'Books of Chronicles,' though of course the latter books are not here meant. The Hebrew means literally 'the book of daily acts,' i. e. 'the diary.' Such annals were preserved by the kings of Persia[2], of Assyria, Babylonia, and also[3] of Israel. Herod. says that the Persian kings in such records preserved the names of men who deserved special honour[4]. This book is referred to by a longer name in vi. 1 f. See Mal. iii. 16; cf. Isa. iv. 31; Ezek. xiii. 9; Phil. iv. 3, &c.; and on Ps. cxxxix. 16 (*Century Bible*).

iii. 1–iv. 17. HAMAN'S PROMOTION TO BE GRAND VIZIER AND HIS PLOT TO DESTROY THE JEWS.

1–6. *Mordecai refusing to bow before the new prime minister, the latter formed a design to destroy the Jews.*

**1. After these things**: an indefinite statement, implying some time between 478 (ii. 16) and 473 (ver. 7).

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[1] See Herod. iii. 159, iv. 43; Layard, *Nin. and Bab.*, p. 355 n. The latter says this mode of punishment obtained in Turkey in his own time.

[2] Ezra iv. 15 (see on), Her. vii. 100, &c.

[3] 1 Kings xiv. 19, &c.

[4] viii. 25.

the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with
2 him. And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed down, and did reverence to Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai
3 bowed not down, nor did him reverence. Then the king's

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**Haman:** originally, according to Jensen, the name of an Elamite deity (*Humman* or *Humban*): see Introd., p. 303, and Ber.-Rys., Paton.

**Hammedatha:** a compound (Jensen thinks) of Haman and a verb: perhaps = 'a gift of Haman' (= 'Humman'): cf. 'Theodore' and 'Nathaniel.'

**the Agagite:** i. e. probably a descendant of Agag (1 Sam. xv), and therefore an Amalekite: see on ii. 5. It is strange, though perhaps where nationalites were so mixed not impossible, that an Amalekite should have been Persia's prime minister. In Great Britain a Jew (Disraeli) was prime minister not very long ago. There are many other explanations of 'Agagite': see Ber.-Rys., and Paton.

**set his seat:** render, 'gave him a position.' The word rendered 'seat' (*kissê*) means 'seat,' then 'throne' (see on i. 12), and then, as here, 'position.'

**above all,** &c.: i. e. he made him Grand Vizier, who had immeasurably greater power than our prime minister.

**2. the king's servants:** see on i. 3.

**bowed down** (= fell on their knees) **and did reverence** = (prostrated themselves) in the true Oriental fashion before superiors and in the manner of modern Mohammedans during prayer.

2$^b$–6. *Mordecai refuses to join the multitude in bending, &c., before Haman. Haman's anger and scheme of revenge.* What objection could Mordecai, though a Jew (ver. 4), have to performing the acts of respect and submissiveness for the chief minister which other subjects performed, and which accord with the ways of Orientals to-day? The commentators (Rawlinson, &c.), Jewish and Christian, say it was Divine homage that Haman demanded. Probably, however, the writer brought in this incident as a literary necessity. It was needful in some way to explain the rivalry and ill-feeling between Mordecai and Haman, and to make Mordecai deny to the new prime minister the usual homage, whatever the implied cause, seemed a fit means towards this end.

**the king had so commanded:** in ordinary cases no such command was necessary. Perhaps Haman had risen from a low family, and a special command was needed to secure the recognition ordinarily shown to holders of the office.

servants, that were in the king's gate, said unto
Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?
Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto 4
him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told
Haman, to see whether Mordecai's [a] matters would stand:
for he had told them that he was a Jew. And when 5
Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not down, nor did him
reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. But he 6
thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they
had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore
Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout
the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people
of Mordecai. In the first month, which is the month 7

[a] Or, *words*

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**3. the king's gate:** see on ii. 19.

**4. matters:** perhaps this is a plural of intensity, 'great affair' = 'strange conduct.' The R.Vm. 'words' may be safely ignored, though the Hebrew allows it.

(whether Mordecai's matters) **would stand:** better 'could stand,' i. e. judicial examination, whether or not the law allowed such conduct.

**6. he thought scorn,** &c.: Wildeboer (followed by Kent and Paton) well expresses the sense of the Hebrew, 'held it beneath his dignity to,' &c.

**sought to destroy,** &c.: Rawlinson and others have pointed to many Oriental parallels to this projected butchery of the Jews, as the great massacre of the Magi (*Magophonia*) at the accession of Darius I, and the slaughter of the Scythians about a century earlier. One may refer to the butchery of whole hordes of Jews in quite recent times in Russia and elsewhere. If, however, Haman or any other prime minister had schemed a wholesale massacre of Jews he would have set about it at once. But it was necessary for the dénouement of the tale that Mordecai and Esther should have time and opportunity for the overthrow of Haman's project, and that could be secured by introducing the incident about the lot, though the writer could not have had much faith in such things. The delay was literally 'allotted.'

7–11. *The king agrees to Haman's proposal and promises help towards realizing it.*

**7. the first month . . . Nisan:** see on Ezra x. 9, 17.

Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and

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**the twelfth year,** &c. : i. e. in 473.

**they** (cast Pur, &c.) : who? In Hebrew the verb is singular, and some make Haman the subject. It is, however, probably a case of the impersonal construction so common in Hebrew ('one cast,' &c. = 'Pur . . . was cast') : see p. 103.

**Pur:** whatever the etymology of the word (see Introd., pp. 301 ff.), the writer takes it to mean 'lot,' which is all one need to know in order to follow the thread of the tale.

**the lot:** better 'lots.' In Hebrew the singular is constantly used for the plural; it indicates the thing meant. Or we have perhaps the generic article; cf. 'the lion.'

Divination by lot (arrows, strips of wood, or bits of paper, pebbles, &c.) was very widespread in ancient times,[1] prevails still among people of low culture, and is not dead even in Great Britain among professedly Christian people.

For what purpose was the present lot taken? Almost certainly to find out a lucky day for the horrid deed which Haman had in mind: so nearly all commentators. Paton, however, argues that the object was to ascertain a lucky day on which to lay the project before the king, and he refers to the fact that, as soon as a day had been pronounced lucky, Haman went in to the king (ver. 8). But Haman wished to present himself with the decision of the lot not only as to the day, but also as to the feasibility of the fact itself. To fix upon a day for the slaughter carried with it approval of the slaughter itself. Besides the day settled by lot (see on ver. 7) was also that for the massacre (see ver. 13 and cf. ix. 18 f.).

How was the lot taken? Probably as follows: There would be twelve lots, marked 1 to 12, put into a box; whichever of these was taken out was to decide the month, in the present case the twelfth month (Adar). Then there would be thirty lots, marked 1 to 30, put into the same or a larger box; whichever was taken out was to decide the day, in the present case the thirteenth day (see ver. 13).

The words 'from day to day and from month to month' refer merely to the succession of numbers indicating months and days. Paton holds that on every month and day from the first month (ver. 7) the lot was taken afresh to know if the day in question was *the* one for visiting the king. In that case they were drawing lots for some eleven months!

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[1] See *Magic, Divination, and Demonology among the Hebrews and Related Peoples*, by the present writer, p. 75, &c.

from month to month, *to* the twelfth *month,* which is the month Adar. And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, 8
There is a certain people scattered abroad and [a] dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from *those of* every people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not [b] for the king's profit to suffer them. If it please the king, 9
let it be written that they be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those

[a] Or, *separated* [b] Or, *meet for the king*

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**to the twelfth** ***month*** **. . . Adar:** read and render (with LXX, Old Lat., and virtually all modern scholars), 'And the lot fell for the 13th (LXX 14th) of the month, Adar.' The mistake in the LXX (14th day) may be due to the influence of ix. 19. The M.T. gives no sense.

**Adar:** see on Ezra vi. 15 and x. 9. Paton is wrong when he says that Adar is mentioned only in Esther.

**8. scattered abroad:** living among people of all nationalities.

**dispersed:** render, as in the R.Vm., 'separated': they keep apart, do not eat with or as others, will not intermarry, &c. The description applies to the Jews of to-day. When due to religious principles the separateness of the Jew is to his credit rather than the reverse. No people on the face of the earth have paid or pay more dearly for their religion than the Jews.

**their laws are diverse:** i. e. their religious laws.

**neither keep they the king's laws:** i. e. when opposed to their religion. The same could be said of Christian martyrs.

**not for the king's profit:** probably better than the R.Vm. The verb occurs in v. 13 ('is not enough for me'), vii. 4 (end) ('not have compensated,' see on), and is restored (?) in i. 22 (see last note on).

**9. If it please the king:** see on Neh. ii. 5.

**written:** i. e. written down as a decree.

**I will pay,** &c.: evidently out of his own pocket, not out of the proceeds of the Jewish massacre. There is no condition attached.

**ten thousand talents of silver:** about £3,360,000 (see on Ezra viii. 26), rather more than two-thirds of the annual revenue of the Persian empire. Rawlinson calls attention to Pythius, who offered this same king (not Darius, as Paton says) a gift of money equal to about 4½ millions sterling [1]—a sum regarded, however, by Grote as fabulous and false. But the requirements of

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[1] Her. vii. 28.

that have the charge of the *king's* business, to bring it
10 into the king's treasuries. And the king took his ring
from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of
11 Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy. And the
king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee,
the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to
12 thee. Then were the king's [a] scribes called in the first
month, on the thirteenth day thereof, and there was
written according to all that Haman commanded unto the
king's satraps, and to the governors that were over every

[a] Or, *secretaries*

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the story and what it is intended to teach do not necessitate our taking these details quite seriously. Nöldeke thinks that this exact sum has been made up by a process of Rabbinical calculation: see E.B. ii. 1401, and Targ.(2) here and on iv. 1.

**those that have charge of the *king's* business**: i. e. those who had charge of the revenues: see ix. 3 and cf. 2 Kings xii. 11 and Neh. xi. 16, 22, &c.

**10. ring:** better 'signet ring.' Signatures are still made in the East by seals, not by pens. By handing over to Haman his seal he gave him the right of signing documents and of thus enforcing his own authority in the name of the king (see viii. 2, 8; Gen. xli. 42; 1 Macc. vi. 15). The seal was sometimes suspended from the neck by a cord and sometimes attached to a cylindrical framework held in the hand.

**the Jews' enemy:** to be an Agagite meant this: see on vii. 6.

**11.** The king promises men and money for the gruesome task. It is strange, if true, that Xerxes should consent to help in butchering his Jewish subjects, including those in Palestine!

12–15. *The decree sent forth throughout the king's dominions.*

**12. scribes:** they must have been very numerous or very learned to be able to write in the script and language of each nationality embraced in the Persian empire of the day: see on i. 22.

They began their work on the thirteenth day of the first month (Nisan), just eleven months before the massacre was ordered to take place (ver. 13). For this long interval see on ver. 6.

**satraps:** the heads of the twenty Persian provinces: see on i. 1 and on Ezra viii. 36.

**governors:** heads of sub-satrapies, such as Zerubbabel and Nehemiah of Judah: see on i. 1 and on Ezra viii. 36.

province, and to the princes of every people; to every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and it was sealed with the king's ring. And letters were sent by posts into all the king's pro- 13
vinces, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey. A copy of the writing, [a] that the 14
decree should be given out in every province, was published unto all the peoples, that they should be ready

[a] Or, *to be given out for a decree*

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**princes:** see on Ezra ix. 1.

**13. posts:** Heb. 'runners,' a sense surviving in '*post*-haste': cf. Job ix. 25, 'my days are swifter than a *post*.' From denoting the fixed positions between which couriers conveyed letters, &c., it came to be used for the couriers themselves. In the present case horses do not seem to have been used, as speed was no object. Contrast what is said in viii. 10. See on i. 22.

**to destroy,** &c.: note the aggregation of synonyms common in legal documents: cf. viii. 11.

**thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month:** see on verses 7, 12. The LXX (Ap. Esther xiii. 6, in the copy of the king's letter) has 'fourteenth day,' but in ix. 1 it has 'thirteenth.' Modern Jews keep the fourteenth and fifteenth, perhaps under the influence of the Passover Feast, which begins Nisan 14th.

[Ap. Esther xiii. 1–7. The king's letter. This is as anti-Jewish a document as was ever penned. In it the Jews are spoken of as 'a malignant people with laws differing from those of all other peoples; they set at defiance the king's authorities, are all men's foes, and work mischief of every kind. Wherefore it is they, their wives and children, must be consigned to Hades.']

**14. copy:** see on Ezra iv. 11, where the same Persian word is used with the difference of one letter (*t* for *r*). Probably we should render, 'a copy of (a part of) the writing; let the decree be given out in every province and let it be published to all the peoples,' &c. The words 'copy of the writing' introduce the very words of the official letter to Artaxerxes in **Ezra iv. 11** (**see on**).

15 against that day. The posts went forth in haste by the king's commandment, and the decree was given out in Shushan the palace: and the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city of Shushan was perplexed.

**4** Now when Mordecai knew all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a
2 loud and a bitter cry: and he came even before the

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**that day:** the thirteenth of Adar (see ver. 13).

**15.** While the couriers hurried to make the proclamation in the provinces the decree was publicly announced in the fortress of Susa. Note the contrast: the king and his minister were sitting to their wine (or to a banquet, Paton) as unconcerned over the impending massacre of Jews as Nero was chanting the 'Fall of Troy' and admiring the beautiful (*sic*) sight of Rome ablaze; on the other hand, the city (or at least the Jewish element in it) was perplexed! See on viii. 15.

## IV–VII

### THROUGH THE INTERVENTION OF ESTHER THE THREATENED SLAUGHTER OF JEWS IS AVERTED AND HAMAN IMPALED ON THE TREE PREPARED BY HIS INSTRUCTIONS FOR MORDECAI.

1–3. *Great lamentation of Mordecai and other Jews.*

**knew:** better 'got to know.' How? See on i. 22.

**all that was done:** including the part played by Haman; see ver. 7.

**rent his clothes** (see on Ezra ix. 3), **and put on sackcloth with ashes** (see Dan. ix. 3; Jonah iii. 6), each act an expression of grief; the coming together of all indicates intense grief.

**sackcloth:** a coarse dark cloth made from the hair of goats and camels. 'Haircloth' would be a better rendering. The Hebrew word is *sack* (whence 'sackcloth'), but its derivation and meaning are very uncertain.

**with ashes:** the construction is that called a zeugma, the reader having to supply the appropriate verb. The Hebrew has simply 'put on haircloth and ashes,' i. e. 'and strewed ashes (on the head).' The versions supply the verb understood, but the Hebrew does not require it.

These expressions of grief are explained (by Schwally) as survivals of the cult of the dead.

**2. even before:** better (as Hebrew) 'as far as before.'

king's gate: for none might enter within the king's gate
clothed with sackcloth. And in every province, whither- 3
soever the king's commandment and his decree came,
there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting,
and weeping, and wailing; and [a]many lay in sackcloth and
ashes. And Esther's maidens and her chamberlains 4
came and told it her; and the queen was exceedingly
grieved: and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and
to take his sackcloth from off him: but he received it
not. Then called Esther for Hathach, one of the king's 5
chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon
her, and charged him to go to Mordecai, to know what
this was, and why it was. So Hathach went forth to 6

[a] Heb. *sackcloth and ashes were spread under many.*

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**for none might,** &c.: because used as a sign of mourning during a death, the haircloth came to be regarded as unclean, as was everything connected in any way with a dead body.

**the king's gate:** see on ii. 19.

**3. great mourning:** the acts mentioned were probably religious ones—confession, prayer, &c.

**fasting:** this has bulked largely in the religions of the ancient world, especially among the Chinese, Hindus, and Persians; to a less degree among the Semites, and still less did it prevail among the classical nations. In the O.T. it is invariably the accompaniment of prayer, and in ver. 16 (see on) the fasting spoken of really includes prayer.

**many:** Heb. 'the many,' which, as in Greek = 'the majority,' 'most.'

**lay in sack** (= hair) **cloth,** &c.: the sense is 'lay on a haircloth strewn with ashes.'

4–9. *Esther ascertains the cause of Mordecai's grief.*

**4. maidens . . . chamberlains** (= eunuchs): an Oriental queen would be sure to have maidens (see on ii. 9) and eunuchs (see on i. 10) to wait on her.

**she sent raiment,** &c., to enable Mordecai to enter the place that he might explain matters: see on ver. 2.

**5. Hathach:** LXX *Akharthaion*; Targ.(1), Talm., 'Daniel.'

**chamberlains:** see on i. 10.

**what this was,** &c.: what the haircloth, &c., meant—a sign of mourning, and what was the cause of the mourning.

Mordecai unto the broad place of the city, which was
7 before the king's gate. And Mordecai told him of all
that had happened unto him, and the exact sum of the
money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's
8 treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them. Also he gave
him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given
out in Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther,
and to declare it unto her; and to charge her that she
should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto
him, and to make request before him, for her people.
9 And Hathach came and told Esther the words of Mor-
10 decai. Then Esther spake unto Hathach, and gave him
11 a message unto Mordecai, *saying*: All the king's servants,
and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that
whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the

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**6. broad place:** see on Ezra x. 9.

**the king's gate:** see on ii. 19.

**7. the exact sum,** &c.: see on iii. 9 and on Neh. viii. 8 ('exactly'). The Heb. noun here used occurs besides only in x. 2.

**8. the** (better 'a') **copy** (see on iii. 14) . . . **given out in Shushan** (see iii. 15): it is probable that the king had a good number of copies prepared to be exhibited at important centres and shown to important personages. But of course printing, typing, and modern methods of copying were unknown in those far-off days. Had men then some method of multiplying other than the drudgery of writing separate copies?

**the** (copy): the Hebrew can, and here does, mean 'a,' though the absence of the article in Hebrew is no proof in itself that the noun ('copy') is indefinite, for in Semitic, as in Keltic, a noun, though definite, drops its article before a genitive.

10–12. *Esther's first answer: she could do nothing.*

**11.** No one was allowed to enter the king's inner apartments unbidden. Esther therefore could not present herself before the king. Herodotus[1], however, says that any subject could gain access to the royal presence if he previously announced himself and was not an objectionable personage. Either the writer is ignorant of king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law for him, that he be put to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days. And they told to Mordecai 12 Esther's words. Then Mordecai bade them return answer 13 unto Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, 14 then shall relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place, but thou and thy father's house shall

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[1] iii. 118, 140.

court etiquette in the time of Xerxes or he intentionally sacrifices accuracy to the desire of magnifying Esther's courage in visiting the king notwithstanding the danger involved.

**inner court:** cf. 'the outer court,' vi. 4. From the former the king could be seen on his throne (see v. 1).

**the golden sceptre:** see v. 2. As represented on the monuments, it resembled a long tapering rod with a headlike ornament at one end and a loop at the other. Xenophon says that three hundred sceptre-bearers attended the elder Cyrus.

**thirty days:** had Esther's place in the king's affections been taken by another? v. 2 suggests a negative answer.

(and) **they** (told): read (with the versions), 'he' (i.e. Hathach).

13 f. *Mordecai's remonstrance.* If the royal edict is executed neither Esther nor her father's house (Mordecai) will be able to escape.

**13. Think not with thyself:** lit. 'imagine not in thy soul' (=self).

**king's house:** here the palace complex, as in ii. 9; see on ii. 3.

**14. relief:** lit. 'breadth,' 'spaciousness.' Among the Semites and also in Persian, Sanskrit, &c., a state of comfort is conceived as one of 'roominess'; the contrary state as one of 'straitness.' The Hebrew verb rendered 'to deliver,' which is cognate to 'Joshua' and 'Jesus,' means literally 'set at large[1].'

**from another place:** i.e. from God: see Jer. xxxi. 35–37. The Divine name is, however, carefully avoided. The two Targs.,

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[1] See *Brief Studies in Psalm Criticism*, by the present writer in *Orientalische Studien* (Nöldeke Memorial), vol. ii. 648 f.

perish: and who knoweth whether thou art not come to
15 the kingdom for such a time as this? Then Esther bade
16 them return answer unto Mordecai, Go, gather together
all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for
me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day:
I also and my maidens will fast in like manner; and so
will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the
17 law: and if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai went his
way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

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Joseph., and Lat. insert 'God.' Perhaps, however (so Siegfried), the writer has in mind deliverance from another nation—Rome. See 1 Macc. viii. 17, xii. 1.

**for such a time as this:** i.e. to deliver.

15 f. *Esther's second reply: she will stake all for her people.*

**16. the Jews that are present:** see on i. 5. From the fact that the Jews at Susa could put to death three hundred men (see ix. 15) it may be inferred that their number was not inconsiderable.

**fast** (=pray) **ye for me:** see on ver. 3 (**fasting**). The word 'prayer' seems studiously avoided, though the thing is implied, because the former—the word—would too obviously suggest God: see on ver. 13 (**another place**).

**three days:** parts only of three days (i.e. some thirty-six hours) may be intended: see Matt. xii. 40; cf. xxviii. 1. If we assume this, the force of what the older commentators say—Esther trusted in God, not in her beauty, or she would not endanger the latter by long fasting—is (as Wild., &c., say) diminished.

**if I perish, I perish**='what must be must be': see Gen. xliii. 14 for a parallel expression.

17. *Mordecai assents to Esther's request.*

**went** (his way): the Hebrew verb (cognate with *'Ibri* =Hebrew, one that has *crossed* (the Jordan or the Euphrates)), means primarily 'to cross,' 'pass over'; then 'to transgress,' and then, as Gen. xviii. 5, and here (perhaps also in Neh. ii. 14, see on) it='to depart' (i.e. to pass over the distance before one). Jewish expositors, however (the Targs., &c.), explain the verb as='to transgress,' understanding that Mordecai transgressed the law by fasting during the Passover (Nisan 14), when there should be only rejoicing. But did he fast during Passover?

[Ap. Esther xiii. 8–18, Mordecai's prayer; xiv. 1–19, Esther's

Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put 5
on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the
king's house, over against the king's house: and the king
sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against
the entrance of the house. And it was so, when the king 2
saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she
obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to
Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther
drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. Then 3
said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther?

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prayer. In these prayers the Divine names 'Lord,' 'God,' 'God of Abraham,' 'King of the Gods,' &c., occur with more frequency than is the case in other books, suggesting, what other considerations make practically certain—that the purpose of the apocryphal additions is to make some amends for the absence of the religious element in the canonical parts of the book.]

## V

1 f. *The king receives Esther.*

**1. on the third day:** i. e. since the fasting began (iv. 16: see on). This shows that the fasting did not last three days.

**put on her royal apparel:** this rendering assumes the insertion of a word (= apparel) found in the versions but lost in the M.T.

**stood:** better, 'came to a stand.' The Hebrew expression really = 'entered and stopped': see Joshua x. 17; Judges ix. 33.

**inner court:** see on iv. 11. In this court was situated the entrance to the pillared hall at the opposite end of which sat the king on his throne. As the queen entered the inner court the king could probably see her through the doorway.

**king's house:** the king's private apartments; see on ii. 3. Dieulafoy, the distinguished French explorer of Susa, says that here the throne-room is alone meant.

**over against** has reference to Esther.

**2. held out . . . the golden sceptre:** see on iv. 11.

**touched:** Vulg. 'kissed.'

3–8. *The queen, encouraged by the king, makes two requests: that the king should accept invitations to dine with her on two separate occasions.*

Since the king has offered much more than that, why does not the queen at once ask for the life of Haman and a reversal of the

and what is thy request? it shall be given thee even to the
4 half of the kingdom. And Esther said, If it seem good unto
the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the
5 banquet that I have prepared for him. Then the king
said, Cause Haman to make haste, that it may be done
as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to
6 the banquet that Esther had prepared. And the king
said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What is thy
petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is
thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be
7 performed. Then answered Esther, and said, My petition
8 and my request is; if I have found favour in the sight of
the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and
to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to
the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do

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cruel edict? Perhaps because the plan of the romance required delay: historical probability is sacrificed to literary necessity. The book must be judged from its character and aim—a romance expressing and helping to sustain the patriotism of the people.

**3. What wilt thou?** lit., 'what is to thee?' i. e. as in Joshua xv. 13, 'what desirest thou?' 'it shall be given,' &c. Render, '(desirest thou anything) up to the half of the kingdom? Then it shall be given;' cf. Mark vi. 23. Note the exaggeration born of Oriental politeness. When to-day in the bazaars of Cairo or Jerusalem one begins to bargain, the vendor will often say, 'Oh, take it for nothing': see Gen. xxiii. 11.

**4. If it seem good,** &c.: see on Neh. ii. 5.

**let the king and Haman come:** the initials of the Hebrew words so translated make up the consonants of Yahweh (Jehovah) —vowel signs were unknown until some centuries after Christ. Jehring, Bullinger, and others say this Divine name is intended to be thus brought into the book, which otherwise has no name for God. But we have here merely an interesting coincidence.

**6. banquet of wine:** referring to the Persian custom of handing round fruit, and especially wine after the meal proper[1]: see vii. 2, 7; Dan. i. 5, 8.

**even to,** &c.: render as in ver. 3, changing the verb only.

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[1] Her. i. 133.

to-morrow as the king hath said. Then went Haman 9
forth that day joyful and glad of heart: but when
Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood
not up nor [a] moved for him, he was filled with wrath
against Mordecai. Nevertheless Haman refrained him- 10
self, and went home; and he sent and fetched his friends
and Zeresh his wife. And Haman recounted unto them 11
the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children,

[a] Or, *trembled before him*

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**8. to-morrow:** Esther wants the king and Haman to be her guests at another banquet, then she will tell the king her petition (see vii. 7 ff.). In itself the reticence of the queen after the king's double assurance (verses 4, 6) is inexplicable, but from the point of view of the tale one may understand it all. Of course some things said or done at the banquet might have had a close connexion with Esther's purpose, though that is not stated or hinted at.

9-13. *Haman's pride and envy.*

**9. Mordecai in the king's gate** (see on ii. 19): he had now evidently taken off his mourning garb: see on iii. 2.

**nor moved,** &c.: better, 'nor trembled before him,' as R.Vm.

**10. Haman refrained himself,** &c.: surely, however, he acted a wise part in consulting his wife and friends, though Paton thinks he ought at once to have wreaked his vengeance on Mordecai.

**friends:** in vi. 13 called 'wise men.'

**Zeresh:** the origin of this name is very uncertain. Some scholars (J. Oppert, &c.) derive it from the Persian *zer* = 'gold,' with ending *sh*, so 'golden': cf. the Greek names 'Chryses,' 'Chryseis.' Jensen, desiring a mythological explanation, has at different times sought the origin of the name in *Kirisha*, the name of an Elamite goddess, and in *Siris*, the name of a Babylonian goddess—both suppositions philologically impossible.

**11. his riches:** see on iii. 9.

**the multitude of his children:** he had ten sons (see ix. 7 ff.). The Targ.(1) says he had in all two hundred and eighteen sons. Among Jews[1], Persians[2], &c., it was thought a great honour to have many sons.

**children:** this is correct, though the Hebrew is the usual one for 'sons'; but we do not say 'sons of Israel.'

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[1] Gen. xxx. 20; Ps. cxxvii. 4 f.

[2] Her. i. 136.

and all the things wherein the king had promoted him,
and how he had advanced him above the princes and
12 servants of the king. Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther
the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the
banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to-
morrow also am I invited by her together with the king.
13 Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai
14 the Jew sitting at the king's gate. Then said Zeresh his
wife and all his friends unto him, Let a [a] gallows be made
of fifty cubits high, and in the morning speak thou unto
the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go
thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the
thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to
be made.

**6** On that night [b] could not the king sleep; and he com-

[a] Heb. *tree*. [b] Heb. *the king's sleep fled* from him.

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**princes . . . servants**: see on i. 3.

**12. did let no man come**: better, 'brought no one.' There is in the language an allusion to the custom of sending servant-men to bring guests: see v. 14; Luke xiv. 17.

**13. availeth me nothing**: lit. 'is not enough for me': see on i. 22 and iii. 8.

**14.** *The advice of Haman's wife and friends.*

**gallows**: better, 'stake or pole for impaling,' lit. 'tree'; then 'wood,' and so 'anything made of wood': see Gen. xl. 19; Joshua viii. 29, &c.; see on ii. 23. The length—about 80 feet—is very great, whether we understand gallows or stake: perhaps the text has suffered corruption. According to vii. 9, it could be put into Haman's house. The two Targs. and Joseph. make sundry interesting additions at this point: see Paton, 240 ff.

**hanged**: render 'impaled': see on ii. 23 and on Ezra vi. 11.

VI. 1–13. MORDECAI FOR HIS SERVICES TO THE KING HONOURED AND PROMOTED.

1 f. *The king, learning of Mordecai's loyal conduct, wishes to reward him.*

**1. could not . . . sleep**: see R.Vm. for literal rendering.

manded to bring the book of records of the chronicles,
and they were read before the king. And it was found 2
written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh,
two of the king's chamberlains, of those that kept the
[a] door, who had sought to lay hands on the king Ahasuerus.
And the king said, What honour and dignity hath been 3
done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants
that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him.
And the king said, Who is in the court? Now Haman 4
was come into the outward court of the king's house, to
speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows
that he had prepared for him. And the king's servants 5
said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And

[a] Heb. *threshold.*

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Targs., LXX, &c., give as cause of the king's sleeplessness that God took his sleep away.

**the book of records,** &c.: see on ii. 23, where a shorter name occurs for the same. Such records would hardly supply the most entertaining reading for a sleepless monarch; but the moral of the tale hangs on the reading just now of these memorials.

**and they were read**: better, as in the Hebrew, 'they were being read,' i. e. through the whole night.

**2.** For this verse see on ii. 21.

**3.** It is passing strange that the king should have forsaken a benefactor who had saved his life: see on ii. 22 (end of note).

**king's servants:** see on i. 3.

4–12[a]. *Haman commanded to heap honours upon his great foe and rival.*

**4. Who is in the court?** Some high officials would be always in charge of the court. It happened that Haman was now one of them.

**outward court:** see iv. 11 and v. 1. The exact plan of the palace complex is a matter of uncertainty, though the excavations of Loftus, and especially of the French engineer Dieulafoy, have helped considerably to make a reconstruction possible. See Driver, 'Daniel,' *Camb. Bible*, p. 125.

Haman dares not enter the inner court uncommanded: see iv. 11 and v. 1.

for **hang . . . gallows** substitute 'impale . . . stake.'

6 the king said, Let him come in. So Haman came in.
And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the
man whom the king delighteth to honour? Now Haman
said in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do
7 honour more than to myself? And Haman said unto the
king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honour,
8 let royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear,
and the horse that the king rideth upon, [a] and on the
9 head of which a crown royal is set: and let the apparel
and the horse be delivered to the hand of one of the
king's most noble princes, that they may array the man

[a] Or, *and the crown royal which is set upon his head*

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**5. come in:** i. e. to the royal bedchamber.

6–9. Haman, saying 'in his heart' (= thinking) that he only could be meant, proposed the very highest distinctions for 'the man whom the king delights to honour.' Compare a contrary example in the Nathan-David incident reported 2 Sam. xii. 1 ff. ('Thou art the man').

**6.** The Talm. Meg., 7A, says that since the writer of Esther knew what was in Haman's heart he must have been inspired!

7 f. **For the man,** &c.: though the Hebrew can bear this construction (acc. of reference), we have here probably an anacoluthon, due to the king's haste in speaking, well imitated by the author: 'The man . . . honour, and let (for him) royal,' &c. The division of verses here is peculiarly unfortunate.

In 8 f. Haman enumerates the things which Persian kings were wont to consider marks of high honour for meritorious subjects: see on ii. 23.

**8. which the king useth,** &c.: render, according to the Hebrew, 'which the king has (actually) worn.' Plutarch[1] (cited by Wild.) refers to an incident in Persian history in which a king gives Tiribaz the coat which he had on, though he was not to wear it.

**and on the head,** &c.: horses wearing crownlike ornaments can be seen on the Assyrian monuments: see Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains* (5), ii. pp. 353, 356, &c.

The rendering of the R.Vm. (so Vulg. and Targ.(2) (not Targ.(1))), which is contrary to the Hebrew, is due to the difficulty of conceiving of 'crowned horses.' Modern discovery has removed this difficulty. A crown is not among Mordecai's decorations in verses 9 and 11.

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[1] *Artax.* 24.

withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and cause him to ride on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour. Then the 10 king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken. Then took Haman the apparel 11 and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and caused him to ride through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour. And Mordecai came again to the 12 king's gate. But Haman hasted to his house, mourning and having his head covered. And Haman recounted 13 unto Zeresh his wife and all his friends every thing that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, If Mordecai, before whom thou hast

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**and proclaim,** &c.: D. Cassel refers to a story in the *Arabian Nights,* in which a disgraced Arab chief is led through a city seated backwards on a camel, the people hurling at him epithets of reproach.

**9.** Cf. Gen. xli. 43. The writer (as Rosenthal first pointed out) seems to have before his mind the history of Joseph: see viii. 6.

**10. Mordecai the Jew:** a member of the doomed race, as was Esther, though the story has so far proceeded as if up to the present this was unknown: see on ii. 8–10.

**that sitteth at the king's gate:** favouring the view (so the versions, &c.) that Mordecai held an official position: see on ii. 19.

**11.** Haman obeyed the king's orders, though inwardly he must have rebelled.

12$^b$–13. *Haman returns home bitterly disappointed.*

**12$^b$. head covered:** a sign of grief: see vii. 8; 2 Sam. xv. 30; Jer. xiv. 4, &c.

**13. his friends . . . his wise men:** the same men are meant: see v. 10, 14.

**If Mordecai,** &c.: the words rest on the prediction that

begun to fall, be of the seed of the Jews, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.
14 While they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

7 So the king and Haman came [a] to banquet with Esther
2 the queen. And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be
3 performed. Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition,
4 and my people at my request: for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I

[a] Heb. *to drink*.

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Israel should subdue Amalek, Haman being a member of that race: see on iii. 1 and see Exod. xvii. 16; Num. xxiv. 20; Deut. xxv. 17-19; 1 Sam. xv; 2 Sam. i. 8 ff.

14-VII. 4. ESTHER'S SECOND BANQUET: HER GREAT REQUEST AT LAST UTTERED—THAT SHE AND HER PEOPLE MAY BE SPARED.

**14. the king's chamberlains** = eunuchs.

**hasted to bring Haman,** &c.: see on v. 12.

**the banquet**: see v. 8, 12.

vii. **1. to banquet**: the verb is a denominative from the noun rendered 'feast' (=banquet): see on i. 3. The R.Vm. is altogether wrong, and is due to a superficial knowledge of Hebrew.

**2.** See v. 3, 6.

**banquet of wine**: see on v. 6.

3 f. Why does the queen hold back her real request until now? Perhaps to avoid divulging the fact of her being a Jewess, but see on v. 8.

**4. we are sold,** &c.: referring to Haman's bribe (iii. 9: see on).

**But if,** &c.: the sense of this very difficult clause appears to be—'for the (=our) distress (in such slavery) would not have had held my peace, [a]although the adversary could not have compensated for the king's damage. Then spake 5 the king Ahasuerus and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? And Esther said, An adversary and an enemy, even 6 this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen. And the king arose in his wrath 7 from the banquet of wine *and went* into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king. Then the king re- 8

[a] Or, *for our affliction is not to be compared with the king's damage*

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been (great) enough (to be removed) at the price of the king's loss (were we to be set free).' This rendering, including the bracketed words, can be all of it obtained from the Hebrew text without changing a single consonant and but one vowel, though in other parts of the book (see ver. 67) the word rendered 'distress' (lit. 'straitness': see on ii. 18) means 'adversary.' The next best of a dozen or more other renderings is that suggested by Oettli, which makes a slight change in the Hebrew: 'for the deliverance (from this bondage) would not be (great) enough (to be obtained) at the price of the king's loss.'

5–10. *Fall and punishment of Haman.*

**5.** The king and queen being now alone, the latter mentions by name the man to whom the project for massacring the Jews was due.

**that durst presume in his heart:** Heb., 'whose heart has filled him to do so': see Acts v. 3. In the psychology of the Hebrews the heart is the seat of the understanding, and so stands, as here, for the intellect itself.

**6. An adversary . . . an enemy:** the first word has reference to conduct—'one who acts against'; the second word to feeling —'one who has ill-will towards': so the Hebrew words may be differentiated.

**7. arose:** Heb., 'was rising.'

**banquet of wine:** see on v. 6.

*and went*: the words are implied (pregnantly) in the preposition, and need not be italicized.

**palace garden:** see on i. 5.

**determined:** Heb., 'completed': see 1 Sam. xx. 7; 2 Sam. xxv. 17; Ezek. v. 13 (for same verb).

turned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the couch whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he even force the queen before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's
9 face. Then said Harbonah, one of the chamberlains that were before the king, Behold also, the [a] gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman hath made for Mordecai, who spake good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman.
10 And the king said, Hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

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[a] Heb. *tree.*

**8. Haman was fallen,** &c.: the words mean simply that Haman was lying suppliantwise at the queen's feet in the manner of the country and time (see the monuments), and the king must have known this. Perhaps, however, he was glad to have any pretence for the punishment he intended to inflict upon Haman.

**couch:** see on i. 6.

**they** (=the eunuchs) **covered Haman's face,** just as the Macedonians, Romans, and apparently (as here) the Persians, did in the case of prisoners condemned to death: see the references in Rawlinson (Comm.); cf. vi. 12 (see on).

The king's **word** or question (**will he,** &c.) was equivalent to a sentence of death to those who knew him. Condamin, &c., depending on the LXX, slightly alter the M.T. reading, 'Haman's face grew red,' which is much simpler.

**9. Harbonah:** in i. 10 the final consonant is different.

**chamberlains:** see on i. 10.

**gallows:** see on ii. 23.

**for Mordecai:** LXX 'for impaling (hanging?) Mordecai.'

**who spake good,** &c.: see ii. 21 f., vi. 2 f.; cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 30; Jer. xxxii. 42.

**in the house of Haman:** how could an eighty-foot long pole be got into any one's house? See on v. 14.

**Hang:** better, 'impale': see on ii. 23.

**10.** Ps. vii. 15 f. was fulfilled in Haman's end.

**hanged:** render, 'impaled.'

**pacified:** see on ii. 1.

On that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of 8
Haman the Jews' enemy unto Esther the queen. And
Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what
he was unto her. And the king took off his ring, which 2
he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai.
And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman. And 3
Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down
at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the
mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he
had devised against the Jews. Then the king held out 4
to Esther the golden sceptre. So Esther arose, and

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VIII.

1 f. *Mordecai succeeds to Haman's honours, wealth, and position.*

**1.** The king transfers Haman's property to the queen. In Persia the property of criminals doomed to death was confiscated by the state (see Her. iii. 129; Jos. *Antiq.* xi. 1, 3 and 4, 6).

**the house of Haman**: i. e. his property (see Gen. xxxix. 4, xliv. 1; 1 Kings xiii. 8; Job viii. 15).

**for Esther had told,** &c.: prior to this the king does not seem to have known that Esther and Mordecai were cousins (see ii. 7, 11. 22, iv. 4–16).

For his personal service in rescuing the king Mordecai had been (as Wild. remarks) rewarded (see vi. 6 ff.). The fresh honours and emoluments came to him through his connexion with the queen, though, of course, his previous conduct had predisposed the king towards him.

**2. his ring**: see on iii. 10. Through being invested with the signet ring Mordecai became Grand Vizier in succession to Haman.

**Esther set,** &c.: Mordecai became steward of Haman's estate, which must have been considerable (see iii. 9, 11, v. 11, ix. 10).

3–17. *Neutralizing of the anti-Jewish decree.*

3–6. *Esther's petition for the revocation of the decree.* Since 'Mordecai the Jew' was now prime minister, and the date fixed for the massacre was nearly a year off, there seems no urgent reason why Esther should again risk her life (see ver. 4) to plead for the withdrawal of the decree. Perhaps the aim is to exalt the patriotism of Esther.

**3. fell down at his feet**: see on vii. 8 and cf. v. 2.

**the king held out . . . the golden sceptre**: Esther must once

5 stood before the king. And she said, If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's
6 provinces: for how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see
7 the destruction of my kindred? Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid
8 his hand upon the Jews. Write ye also [a] to the Jews, as

[a] Or, *concerning*

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more have presented herself before the king unbidden (see on iv. 11). But the queen on the present occasion has begun to speak before the sceptre is held out to her.

**5. If it please,** &c.: see on Neh. ii. 7. The heaping up of adulatory epithets accords well with the ways of the East even now.

**right:** Heb. *kāsher* (cf. *kōsher*). In post-biblical Hebrew the word stands for what is in accordance with religious laws—food, drink, &c.

**reverse:** better, 'revoke': lit. 'cause to return.'

**letters:** see iii. 12–14, and for the word on i. 22.

**devised by Haman,** and therefore revocable. But the king cannot accept the argument. It was the king's decree and could not be altered.

**6.** Cf. Gen. xliv. 34, and see on vi. 9.

**kindred:** see ii. 10, 20.

7 f. The king consents, in his own way, to meet Esther's wishes. He cannot call back the edict which has gone forth, for no Persian law is alterable (i. 19), but he can and will send forth another decree which will make the other of no effect (ver. 11).

**7. and to Mordecai the Jew:** Esther and the king seem up to this time to be alone, and this clause, omitted by most of the versions, is rejected by many modern editors. But see ver. 8, 'Write *ye*,' &c.

**8. Write ye,** &c.: Mordecai, having now the king's seal, could himself, as Haman had done (iii. 11 f.), issue and send forth a new

it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.
Then were the king's scribes called at that time, in the 9
third month, which is the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth *day* thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded unto the Jews, and to the satraps, and the governors and princes of the provinces which are from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language. And he wrote in the 10
name of king Ahasuerus, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by posts on horseback, riding on

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edict. Here Esther is associated with Mordecai. It looks as if some words between verses 7 f. had fallen out.

**seal,** &c.: see on iii. 10.

**reverse:** see on ver. 5.

9-14. *The measures taken by Mordecai.* See notes on iii. 12-15, where in describing the steps taken by Haman in issuing the first decree, the language and matter are much the same.

**9.** This verse is the longest in the hagiographa.

**the third month . . . Sivan,** &c.: i. e. two months and ten days later than the issue of Haman's decree (iii. 12 f.). What happened in the interval? See iv. 1 to viii. 2.

**Sivan:** one of the Babylonian month names (see on Ezra ix. 17), corresponding roughly to our May-June.

**satraps . . . governors . . . princes:** see on iii. 12.

**hundred twenty and seven provinces:** see on i. 1.

**10. sealed:** see on iii. 10.

**letters:** better, 'dispatches' (see on i. 22).

**posts:** see on iii. 13.

**posts on horseback:** better, 'mounted couriers.'

**riding,** &c.: render, 'riding on swift steeds bred of royal studs.' For this translation the only textual change necessary is the removal to the last place of the verse of the one word rendered above 'royal' (R.V. 'used in the king's service') which comes from a Persian noun *kshatra* (= 'kingdom').

[a]swift steeds that were used in the king's service, bred of
11 the stud: wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, *their* little ones and women, and to take the
12 spoil of them for a prey, upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, *namely*, upon the thirteenth *day* of the
13 twelfth month, which is the month Adar. A copy of the writing, [b]that the decree should be given out in every province, was published unto all the peoples, and that

[a] Or, *swift steeds, mules,* and *young dromedaries*

[b] Or, *to be given out for a decree*

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**used in the king's service:** in Heb. one word = 'royal,' or literally 'belonging to the kingdom' (see above and ver. 14).

**stud:** judging from the Persian and Arabic the word in the M.T. = lit. 'mares.' Then it probably came, as here, to have a collective sense, as in the E.VV. In post-biblical Hebrew the word = 'mule,' but 'bred' of (= 'descended from') 'mules' gives no good sense.

**11.** *Contents of the new decree.* On the day fixed for the slaughter of the Jews, who were supposed in the first decree to calmly submit to their fate, the Jews were authorized to defend themselves, and in addition (see ver. 13) to take vengeance upon their foes.

**their life** = themselves (Semitic idiom).

**to destroy,** &c.: see on iii. 13.

**12.** See on iii. 13.

[Apoc. Esther xvi. 1–24. The letter of Artaxerxes. In this the king revokes the former decree (see on verses 7 f. and cf. i. 19), charges Haman with trying to get Persia into the hands of the Macedonians, while the Jews are said to live by very just laws and not to be evil doers. The letter bears on its face clear marks of its spuriousness, though it is followed by Josephus, &c. It is very different from the royal edicts of Ezra-Nehemiah: see p. 12 ff.]

13 f. See on iii. 14 f. Note how the tables are again turned. Mordecai's adversary has been impaled on the stake prepared for himself. In the new edict the Jews are not only to resist being massacred, but to turn upon their foes and massacre them—and they did (ix. 12, 16).

the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. So the posts that rode 14
upon swift steeds that were used in the king's service went out, being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment; and the decree was given out in Shushan the palace. And Mordecai went forth from the presence 15
of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a robe of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan shouted and was glad.
The Jews had light and gladness, and joy and honour. 16
And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever 17
the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had gladness and joy, a feast and a good day. And

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**14. posts**: see on iii. 13.

**that rode upon**: render, 'that rode upon swift royal steeds.'

**being hastened,** &c.: what need was there? See on verses 3-6.

**Shushan the palace**: see on i. 2 and on Neh. i. 2.

15-17. *Jewish feasting and rejoicing.*

**15. royal apparel**: see vi. 8, where the same Hebrew words are used though a different garment is intended. The grand vizier was allowed to dress much as the king did, though, according to Rawlinson, the king's own outer garb was purple, or purple embroidered with gold.

**crown**: not the Heb. word in i. 11 (see on), ii. 17, vi. 8.

**the city . . . shouted,** &c.: contrast with what is said in iii. 15 (see on) 'the city was perplexed.' Would the whole city be so much moved by what affected the Jews? Have we not here and in iii. 15 an exaggeration for the sake of magnifying Jewish influence in Persia?

**16. light**: a symbol of prosperity (see Job xxii. 22, xxx. 24; Ps. xxvii. 1, xxxvi. 9, &c.).

**gladness**: contrast with the sadness of iv. 3.

**17. province**: see on i. 1.

**a good day**: i. e. a festal day, as in ix. 19, 22. In post-biblical Hebrew the word is constantly used in this sense. One of the treatises of the Tosephta is called by this name (*Yōm Ṭob*).

many from among the peoples of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews was fallen upon them.

9 Now in the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have rule over them; whereas it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated
2 them; the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them was fallen

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**many . . . became Jews:** no other rendering of the words is possible, though others have been proposed. Once more the tables are turned (see ver. 13). Less than three months back it was dangerous to be known as a Jew (see ii. 10, &c.). Now it is dangerous to be thought anything else—and that in Persia, not Judaea!

This mention of proselytes, the earliest in the O.T., proves that the book is not older than the Greek period (cf. ix. 27).

**peoples of the land:** see on Ezra iii. 3.

**the fear of,** &c.: objective gen. (see ix. 2 f. and cf. Gen. xxxv. 5; Exod. xv. 16; Deut. xi. 25, &c.).

## IX.

1–10. *The Jews resist and slaughter their foes.* It is quite evident that the Jews did much more than defend themselves (see on ver. 13 and on viii. 13 f.). They put to death (1) 500 in the fortified quarters (ver. 6), (2) 300 in the civilian quarter (ver. 15), and (3) 75,000 in the provinces (ver. 16).

**1. in the twelfth month:** i. e. about nine months after the issuing of the second decree (viii. 9). The narrative is silent as to the doings of this interval.

**to have rule:** better, 'to have the mastery,' lit. 'to have power.'

**over them,** &c.: punctuate and render (as Siegfried, &c.), 'over them it was turned about (= the tables were turned, see on viii. 13 f.), so that the Jews got the mastery over their enemies.'

**2.** See viii. 11.

**to lay hand on:** see on ii. 21.

upon all the peoples. And all the princes of the provinces, 3
and the satraps, and the governors, and they that did the
king's business, helped the Jews; because the fear of
Mordecai was fallen upon them. For Mordecai was 4
great in the king's house, and his fame went forth throughout all the provinces: for the man Mordecai waxed
greater and greater. And the Jews smote all their 5
enemies with the stroke of the sword, and with slaughter
and destruction, and did what they would unto them
that hated them. And in Shushan the palace the Jews 6
slew and destroyed five hundred men. And Parshan- 7
datha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha, and Poratha, and 8
Adalia, and Aridatha, and Parmashta, and Arisai, 9

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**3. princes . . . satraps . . . governors:** see on iii. 12.

**they that did the king's business:** see on iii. 9.

**helped the Jews:** by so doing the official class would be helping themselves. See what follows in this and the next two verses.

**4. his fame:** this word = 'what is said' (from the point of view of the speaker). The Heb. word = 'what is heard' (from the point of view of the hearer).

**5. the Jews smote all,** &c.: Paton, guided by an excessive literalism, renders 'so among their enemies the Jews made a smiting,' &c. The preposition rendered 'among' (*b*) often introduces a direct object, and it does so with this very verb in 1 Sam. xiv. 31, xxiii. 2, &c. The E.VV. are therefore correct.

**and with slaughter and destruction:** in Hebrew this is simply an adverbial or circumstantial clause adding force to the principal verb. The idiom is very common in Hebrew, but seems odd when put literally into English.

**6. Shushan the palace:** see on i. 2 and on Neh. i. 2. Note the sharp differentiation between the military (ver. 6) and the civilian quarters (ver. 14 f.) of Shushan.

7-9. The name of Haman's ten sons appear in various forms in the versions, those in the LXX differing much from the orthography of the Hebrew. The names are generally held to be of Persian origin, and gallant attempts have been made to prove this. The M.T. has many peculiarities in the forms and positions of the letters and in the arrangement of the names, and the Massorites and others have busied themselves much in explaining these things (see Ber.-Rys., Wild., Paton, &c.).

10 and Aridai, and Vaizatha, the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Jews' enemy, slew they; but
11 on the spoil they laid not their hand. On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace
12 was brought before the king. And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what is thy request further?
13 and it shall be done. Then said Esther, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do to-morrow also according unto this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows.
14 And the king commanded it so to be done: and a decree was given out in Shushan; and they hanged Haman's

---

**10. but on the spoil they laid not their hand**, though the terms of the edict allowed them to (viii. 11). Why did they thus restrain themselves? There are many guesses, one that the Jews wished to remove all suspicion that they were actuated by mercenary considerations: cf. Gen. xiv. 22.

11–15. *Esther by her earnest petition secures from the king an additional day in which the Jews may take vengeance on their foes—this time in the civilian quarters.*

**12.** The Jews have slain 500 men, including Haman's ten sons. Is the queen satisfied? She is not (see next verse).

**13.** Esther's petition: viz. that the Jews may have another day granted them to massacre their enemies in the civil as they had in the military quarters (ver. 6), and that Haman's sons, already killed (verses 7–9), should be impaled. The petition does not say much for the queen's humanity, or even for the humanity of the writer who created her character.

**14.** The king assents and issues a decree embodying both the requests of the queen.

**they hanged:** render, 'impaled.' In the present case, at all events, even if not usually, persons impaled had been previously put to death (see on Ezra vi. 11).

ten sons. And the Jews that were in Shushan gathered 15
themselves together on the fourteenth day also of the
month Adar, and slew three hundred men in Shushan;
but on the spoil they laid not their hand. And the other 16
Jews that were in the king's provinces gathered themselves
together, and stood for their lives, and had rest from their
enemies, and slew of them that hated them seventy and
five thousand; but on the spoil they laid not their hand.
*This was done* on the thirteenth day of the month Adar; 17
and on the fourteenth day of the same they rested, and
made it a day of feasting and gladness. But the Jews 18
that were in Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth
*day* thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof; and on the
fifteenth *day* of the same they rested, and made it a day
of feasting and gladness. Therefore do the Jews of 19

**15. the fourteenth day:** see on verses 16–19.

**three hundred men:** cf. ver. 6. One would have expected a larger number in the civilian quarter, where the population was greater.

**on the spoil,** &c.: see on ver. 10.

16–19. *The institution of Purim; origin of the two different days of its observance.* The provincial Jews brought their acts of defence and vengeance to an end in one day, the thirteenth, resting on the following day. The Susa Jews filled two days with such acts, the thirteenth and fourteenth, resting on the fifteenth day. This difference is made to explain the divergent usage as regards the day when Purim was observed, in Susa the fifteenth day, in the provinces the fourteenth. This is, however, a case of making history to explain custom: cf. what are called 'Aetiological myths,' the ritual coming first, the myth explaining (?) it coming after [1].

Verses 16 f. should be read closely together, thus:—

'16 Now the other Jews . . . seventy and five thousand (though on the spoil they laid not their hand) 17 on the thirteenth day,' &c.

**18. assembled,** &c., for self-defence and slaughter (see verses 6, 15).

**a day of,** &c.: see ver. 17 and viii. 17.

**19.** Render, 'Therefore the Jews of unwalled cities (towns and the villages, that dwell in the unwalled towns, make the fourteenth day of the month Adar *a day of* gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another.

---

[1] See W. R. Smith, *Rel. Sem.*$^{(2)}$ 17 f.

20 And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the
21 king Ahasuerus, both nigh and far, to enjoin them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar,
22 and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly, as the days

---

villages) are accustomed to keep the fourteenth of the month Adar as a source of joy, as a banquet, as a feast day, and as (a time for) sending portions to one another.'

**villages:** the Heb. word = 'cities,' 'towns,' or 'villages without walls of defence' (see Ezek. xxxviii. 11; Zech. ii. 8). In Deut. iii. 5 they are contrasted with 'walled cities.'

**that dwell in the unwalled towns:** this clause adds nothing, and was, no doubt, originally a marginal gloss to the one Heb. word translated in the E.VV. 'of the villages.'

**sending portions:** see on Neh. viii. 10.

Some codd. of the LXX add what is essential to the sense and probably stood originally in the M.T.: 'But dwellers in the cities keep also the fifteenth of Adar as a joyful and festal day, sending portions to their neighbours.'

20–32. *Two dispatches concerning the observance of Purim, one sent forth in the name of Mordecai* (20–22), *the other in the names of Mordecai and Esther* (29–32). Since the time of J. D. Michaelis (d. 1791) many scholars have been inclined to regard the whole of verses 20–32 as an independent piece added by the writer of the rest of the book to complete the history. The evidence is not very decisive either way, though on the whole language and matter favour this conclusion (see p. 299).

20–22. *Mordecai's decree.*

**20. these things:** i.e. what the letters (dispatches) enjoin, not the present book.

**letters:** see on i. 22.

**21. keep:** Heb. 'continue to keep' (part.).

**fourteenth . . . fifteenth day:** i. e. both days are to be kept by all Jews. According to verses 17–19 the country Jews kept the fourteenth, those of Susa the fifteenth. We have here probably the *post eventum* justification of the later (and modern) practice of observing both days (see on ix. 16–19); cf.

wherein the Jews had rest from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to gladness, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.
And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and 23
as Mordecai had written unto them; because Haman the 24
son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur, that is, the lot, to consume them, and to
destroy them; but when *the matter* came before the king, 25

---

the Jewish custom of keeping two New Year's days, and even in early times two Sabbaths, to be sure that all the nation kept the festival on the same day.

**22.** The words **as the days . . . into a good day** are parenthetic.

**the month:** render, 'as the month.'

**good** (i.e. festival) **day.**

23–28. *Mordecai's command obeyed.*

**23. undertook:** the Hebrew verb (cognate with *qabbalah*) means to accept and recognize as traditional, and therefore obligatory. It is a great word in post-biblical Judaism, but in this sense occurs in the O.T. only here and in ver. 27.

The Jews look upon them (1) to keep on doing as they had begun (verses 17–19); (2) to carry out Mordecai's behest (verses 21 f.): but how could they do contradictory things? See on ver. 21.

24 f. *An account of Haman's plot*, differing from that in iii. 7–15 (see below).

**24. Haman . . . the Agagite:** see on iii. 1.

**the enemy,** &c.: see on iii. 10.

**devised:** see viii. 3.

**Pur:** see on iii. 7.

(to) **consume them:** Heb. *hummam*, with a word-play on 'Haman.' The verb (= 'to confound') does not occur in i–ix. 19, and has been unnecessarily rejected by some editors. It occurs in Jer. li. 34 (E.VV. 'crushed').

**25.** *the matter*: as this expression is implied in the feminine (= neuter) forms of the verb the italics should be dispensed with. Some (Syr., the Targs., Ryssel, &c.) make the feminine suffix refer to Esther, 'When she came,' &c. But she has not been

he commanded by letters that his wicked device, which he had devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head; and that he and his sons should be hanged
26 on the gallows. Wherefore they called these days Purim, after the name of Pur. Therefore because of all the words of this letter, and of that which they had seen concerning this matter, and that which had come unto
27 them, the Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail, that they would keep these two days according to the writing thereof, and according to the appointed time thereof, every year;

---

mentioned since ver. 13. It will be noted that in the present account, as above explained, Esther's part (see v–vii) is entirely ignored, which is suggestive of a different source.

**he commanded by letters:** the Heb. here is strange and unparalleled. Besides, we know elsewhere of no written decision of the king pronouncing sentence upon Haman. Probably the words are a copyist's marginal gloss.

**he and his sons should be hanged** (see on ii. 23) **on the gallows** (= 'stake'): apparently at one time, but according to vii. 10, ix. 14 Haman's sons were impaled after their father.

**26.** This explains for the first time in the book why lot is called *Pur*, i. e. to connect the tale incidents of the book and its patriotism with the already existing Persian feast Purim (see ver. 24, iii. 7).

**Purim:** the Persian (?) word is pluralized as if Hebrew.

**Therefore** should be immediately joined with ver. 27, 'the Jews ordained,' &c. The words between form a parenthesis.

**this letter:** see on Ezra iv. 8, where the Aramaic form of the same word occurs. The reference is, of course, to Mordecai's dispatch (verses 21 f.).

**this matter:** the theme of the letter (ver. 20 'letters').

**27** gives the contents of Mordecai's dispatch (21 f.), not (as Paton) the substance of ver. 19.

**such as joined themselves:** i. e. proselytes (see on viii. 17).

**writing:** the 'letters' of ver. 20.

**thereof:** Heb., 'their' (writing); the possessive pronoun refers in both cases to the two days.

**the appointed time:** see on ver. 21.

and that these days should be remembered and kept 28
throughout every generation, every family, every province,
and every city; and that these days of Purim should
not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them
[a]perish from their seed. Then Esther the queen, the 29
daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with
all [b]authority to confirm this second letter of Purim.
And he sent letters unto all the Jews, to the hundred 30
twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus,
*with* words of peace and truth, to confirm these days of 31

---

[a] Heb. *be ended.* [b] Heb. *strength.*

---

**28. family,** or clan, subdivision of a tribe (see p. 52).

**seed**: descendants.

No nation in history has shown such solidarity and persistence in upholding the ways of the fathers as the Jews.

29-32. *Mordecai's (and Esther's) second dispatch (letter) enjoining fasting and loud lamentation as a part of the Feast.* The text has evidently been tampered with, for while Esther and Mordecai are the agents elsewhere, in ver. 30 it is one only, 'he' (unless we explain impersonally). This and the fact that in ver. 32 Esther confirms by special command what is prescribed in ver. 31 make it likely that this second letter is sent to supply what was lacking in the first.

**29. Esther . . . daughter of Abihail:** see on ii. 15.

**wrote:** the verb is fem. and implies a fem. subject, though, of course, it may be a case of the verb agreeing (in Heb.) with the nearest subject. Paton omits all reference to Mordecai in this verse and makes this second dispatch one of the queen's only.

**with all authority:** i. e. probably (as Keil, Scholz, &c.) 'with emphasis.'

**this second letter** ('dispatch'): referring to what follows (ver. 31). For the word **letter** see on ver. 26.

**30.** Not in the LXX.

**he:** i. e. Mordecai, if the text is correct (see on 29-32).

**letters:** see on i. 22.

**hundred twenty and seven provinces:** see on i. 1.

***with* words,** &c.: render, 'with words of greeting and of faithfulness.' Probably these words were on the outside of each dispatch (letter) sent out. There is no need to italicize *with*, as it is contained in the accus. case implied. 'Words of' are hardly in apposition with letters (as Bertheau-Ryssel, &c.).

Purim in their appointed times, according as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined them, and as they had ordained for themselves and for their seed,
32 [a] in the matter of the fastings and their cry. And the commandment of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.

10 And the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land,
2 and upon the isles of the sea. And all the acts of his power and of his might, and the full account of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced

[a] See ch. iv. 3.

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**31. to confirm** (or 'establish') **these days,** &c.: with special reference to what is mentioned in the end of the verse. The purpose of the second dispatch was to establish fasting and loud lamentation (see iv. 1, 3) as an essential part of the feast.

**in the matter of,** &c.: better, 'as regards the acts of fasting and their (accompanying) lamentation.' See for the idiom 'words' or 'things of' (='instances' or 'acts of') 'Brief Studies in Psalm Criticism' by the present writer in *Orientalische Studien* (Nöldeke), ii. 648.

**their** (cry): refers to the acts of fasting, the loud lamentation accompanying fasting (see iv. 1, 3).

**32.** The queen issues a mandate confirming what Mordecai had in his two dispatches enjoined.

**the book:** the word in plural is translated 'letters' in ver. 20 (see on i. 22). Perhaps Esther issued a dispatch of her own, endorsing what her cousin had done.

x. 1–3. *The king and his tribute. Mordecai's greatness.* This section hangs loosely on to what precedes, and is almost certainly an addition made from a larger record (see on ver. 2) for the purpose of extolling the king and his prime minister, who bulk so largely in the book.

**1. laid a tribute:** the purpose is not stated.

**isles of the sea** = the lands washed by the Mediterranean Sea. The extent of the king's dominions shows that no other than Xerxes can be meant.

With this verse and the first half of the next the account of Xerxes abruptly ends, though in the sources used there was probably a detailed record of that king's reign and his doings.

**2. might:** the Heb. word is used collectively for heroic or valiant deeds, as in 1 Kings xv. 23; 1 Chron. xxix. 30, &c.

him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? For Mordecai the 3
Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren; seeking the good of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

---

**book of the chronicles,** &c.: the allusion is to a history of the kings of Media and Persia, probably the official records kept year by year and reign by reign, referred to in ii. 23 and vi. 1. There is no reason to doubt that every Persian subject and even others properly recommended could consult such records. The part dealing with the reign of Xerxes might be expected to give full information about such a grand vizier as this book makes him out to be. Though the book is not written for the history in it, yet its tale must at least bear the appearance of history, like the Hellenized romances of Ktesias.

**3. accepted of** = 'liked' (so the Hebrew).

**speaking peace:** render (with Sieg., &c.), 'caring for the well-being of' (see Ps. lxxxv. 8 (9); Zech. ix. 10). The word translated 'peace' never means that, nor is the idea of peace in its root, verbal or nominal: it = 'completeness', then 'perfect well-being'—nothing lacking (see on Ps. cxix. 165, *Century Bible*).

[Ap. Esther x. 4-13. Epilogue describing how the Feast of Purim was established.]

# ADDITIONAL NOTES[1]

## I. WAS CYRUS THE GREAT A ZOROASTRIAN?

It will be seen from the notes in this volume (see pp. 14, 40, 102) that the present writer answers the above question in the affirmative, as have nearly all writers in the past and as do most modern writers. It must be admitted, however, that the evidence is scanty and indecisive. The number of Cyrus inscriptions that have been found is but small, the most important being the Cyrus Cylinder[2] (see p. 14) and the Nabonidus-Cyrus Chronicle[3], both in the British Museum. In both Cyrus speaks of himself as a worshipper of Marduk and as recognizing other Babylonian deities, Bel, Nebo, &c., just as in Ezra i. 2 he ascribes to Yahweh the victories he had won, and as Darius I at a later time recognized Apollo. But in no extant inscription of Cyrus is there the remotest hint of his connexion with Zoroastrianism. This may be due to the fact that almost all the contemporary records of his reign have been lost—assuming that a goodly number of such at one time existed, in harmony with the customs of the time. It should be remembered, however, that there is not a syllable in the Cyrus inscriptions known to us intimating that this great king professed any other religion than that of Zarathustra: they are simply silent as to his own religion. Some have interpreted the free way in which he allows himself to be written down as a worshipper of the gods of Babylon as well as of Yahweh as a proof of indifferentism or Agnosticism in religion, and that his tolerance was dictated by policy pure and simple (see p. 40). But the trilingual inscriptions found at Behistun, Persia[4], prove that Darius Hystaspis was an almost fanatical upholder of Mazdaism (= Zoroastrianism); yet in the Gadatas inscription[5] he associates himself with the worshippers of Apollo as if he were of the same religion as themselves. The toleration displayed by the early Persian kings is to be explained rather from the lofty ethical principles of the religion they professed (see p. 15)—Zarathustraism (Zoroastrianism), as the present writer maintains. Yet as Darius is so explicit in his utterances concerning his religion it is admittedly strange that Cyrus should have kept silence regarding the matter. Perhaps, however, if we possessed Cyrus inscriptions in as great an abundance as we do inscriptions of Darius it would be found that he too was a zealous adherent of the same faith, though, of course, he might have been less outspoken than Darius on religious questions: it is not always the man who speaks most about religion that is most religious.

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[1] The author regrets that he has failed to obtain access to an article by Professor A. V. Williams Jackson in *The Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. xxi, pp. 160–84. The subject treated of is 'The Religion of the Achaemenian Kings,' and its value is vouched for by the name of the writer: Dr. L. H. Gray adds an Appendix.

[2] See text and translation in Schrader, *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek*, iii. 121 ff.; H. C. Rawlinson, *Journal of the R. A. S.*, 1880, 71 ff.

[3] Schrader, *op. cit.*, 167 ff.; Pinches, *JSBA.*, I. vii. 139–76.

[4] See *JRAS.*, 1847, for text and translation by H. C. Rawlinson, and especially the new and greatly improved edition issued in 1907 by the British Museum. See, for a revised translation, *Records of the Past*, i. 109 ff.

[5] See p. 102.

There is nothing in the records which have come down to us that suggests a change in the religion of Persia between 529 when Cyrus died and 521 when Darius I began to reign. If the two kings were of different religions some indication of the consequent changes in the religious attitude of the government must have survived. Among those who say that Cyrus was a Zarathustran the following may be named, leaving out the older writers who were practically all of this opinion: Ewald[1], Kuenen[2], Renan[3], McCurdy[4] (who, however, wrongly identifies the old Iranian religion with Zoroastrianism), Nöldeke[5], Guthe[5], Gunkel[5], Bertholet[5], Budde[5], Wilhelm[5] (Jena), and Staerk[5] (Jena).

Several recent scholars, however, hold that Darius I was the first Persian king to profess Zarathustraism: thus Sayce[6], Pinches[7] (who says Cyrus, as his Anzan forefathers, was a Polytheist), E. Meyer[8], and Sir Henry Howorth[5]. Dr. E. Lehmann of Copenhagen[9] comes to the conclusion that the evidence is insufficient to permit of a decision on either side of this controversy. But it is hard to think that the king of Persia in 521 supported a different religion from that of his predecessors during the foregoing eight or nine years, without there being the slightest indication of the change in any of the records which have reached us. Note, moreover, that Darius I claims that on coming to the throne he restored the religion of his ancestors which Gaumâta the Magian had suppressed[10].

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[1] *History of Israel*, v. 40. [2] *The Religion of Israel*, ii. 139 f.

[3] *History of the People of Israel*, iii. 382.

[4] *History, Prophecy, and the Monuments*, iii. 429 ff., cf. p. 307.

[5] Communicated orally to the writer. [6] *Herodotus*, p. 440.

[7] *The Old Testament in the Light of the Historical Records of Assyria and Babylon*, 423. [8] *Geschichte*, &c. iii. 126.

[9] *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*$^{(2)}$, edited by Chantepie de la Saussaye, ii. 156.

[10] Behistun inscriptions, col. i. 14: *Records of the Past*, i. p. 115; British Museum edition, p. 168.

## 2. WERE THE EARLY PERSIAN KINGS TOLERANT TOWARDS THE VOTARIES OF OTHER RELIGIONS THAN THEIR OWN?

This question is asked and answered with special reference to Cyrus (Ezra i–iii), Darius I (Ezra v f.), and Artaxerxes I (Ezra vii to end of Nehemiah), and the present writer answers unhesitatingly in the affirmative: see for illustration and proof what is said on pp. 14 f., 40, and 102. It has been repeatedly stated that the sympathy shown by the early Persian kings towards the Jews and their religion arose from their consciousness of the close affinity between Zarathustraism and Yahwism: but even if the affinity were as close as it is held to be (Zarathustra was not strictly a monotheist but a duotheist), how came Cyrus and Darius I to show equal favour towards the polytheisms and ethically inferior religions of Babylon and Greece? It is probable that the official decrees in which the above kings are made to speak of themselves as worshippers of the gods of Babylon and Greece as well as of Yahweh were worded by the priests of the various cults concerned; but it is highly improbable that these kings would allow foreign priests to make them say what was false, especially if there was a tendency in what was written to compromise them with the priests of their own religion and therefore with the leaders among their own people.

Lehmann[1] seems to think that Zarathustraism was intolerant, and he refers to the Avesta for support, since in it political as well as religious opponents are classed with what belongs to the kingdom of evil, and are therefore in the name of Ahuramazda to be persecuted out of existence. But the author does not specify the period to which his description applies. It is known that the Avesta as we have it, including the often ferocious Gâthas, belongs to the time of the Sassanids (A. D. 226–641), when all the great religions seem to have given themselves up very freely to the bitterest persecution.

It has been pointed out as an illustration of the intolerance of the early Persian kings that Cambyses destroyed the Egyptian temples, though he spared the Jewish temple at Yeb[2] because the religion was akin to his own. But when Cambyses invaded Egypt on the occasion referred to his purpose was to punish the priests of Memphis for some acts of disloyalty against Persia of which they had been guilty. The sacred bull Apis was killed by the Persian army, the leading spirits among the priests being either imprisoned or put to death[1]. This was probably the occasion on which Cambyses did what the Sachau Papyri ascribe to him; the dates agree well. But this destruction of the Egyptian temples was a political not a religious act, as was the destruction of the Magian temple by Darius I[2].

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 183 (3rd ed., p. 201).

[2] Sachau Papyri, i. 14.

For a contrary view of Cambyses' conduct see G. Rawlinson, *Ancient Monarchies* (4), iii. 394.

## 3. NOTE TO EZRA VIII. 21 (SEE PAGE 128).

Clay has found an interesting parallel to this notching in the Kassite tablets (B.C. 1800–1200), on some of which are lists of names ticked off by a stylus applied to the clay.

## 4. NOTE TO ESTHER II. 12–15 (SEE PAGE 319).

In his newly-issued work (see p. 305 for full title) Cosquin submits to a testing examination the theories of the Esther legend represented by de Goeje, Jensen, and Paul Haupt. The first (followed by Kuenen, August Müller, and Dyroff) held that we are to seek the origin alike of the Esther romance and of the Shahriar tale of the *Thousand and One Nights* in an old Persian tale[3]. Cosquin follows A. W. O. Schlegel in tracing this old Persian tale back to a Sanskrit source. He points out, moreover, that the Esther legend differs too much to have a common origin with either the Persian or Arabian romance. As against Jensen's identification of Vashti (Mashti) with an alleged Elamite goddess Vashti, Cosquin summons the authority of the greatest living Elamite palaeographer, R. P. Scheil, for the statement that the Elamite name is *Parti*, not Vashti (Mashti), Parti being daughter of Tariša. The author, a member of the (French) Institute, more interested apparently in archaeology than in theology, is as much opposed to the composite theory of Paul Haupt as he is to the Persian theory of de Goeje or the Elamite-Babylonian theory of Jensen.

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[1] Herodotus, iii. 27 ff.

[2] See reference in note 10 on p. 361.

[3] *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (9), vol. xxiii, *Thousand and One Nights*.

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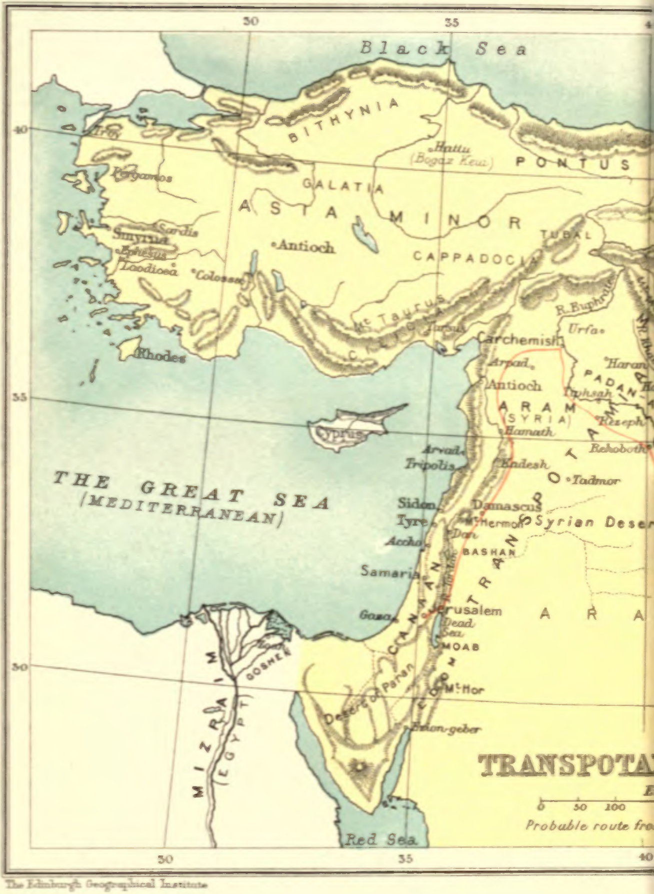
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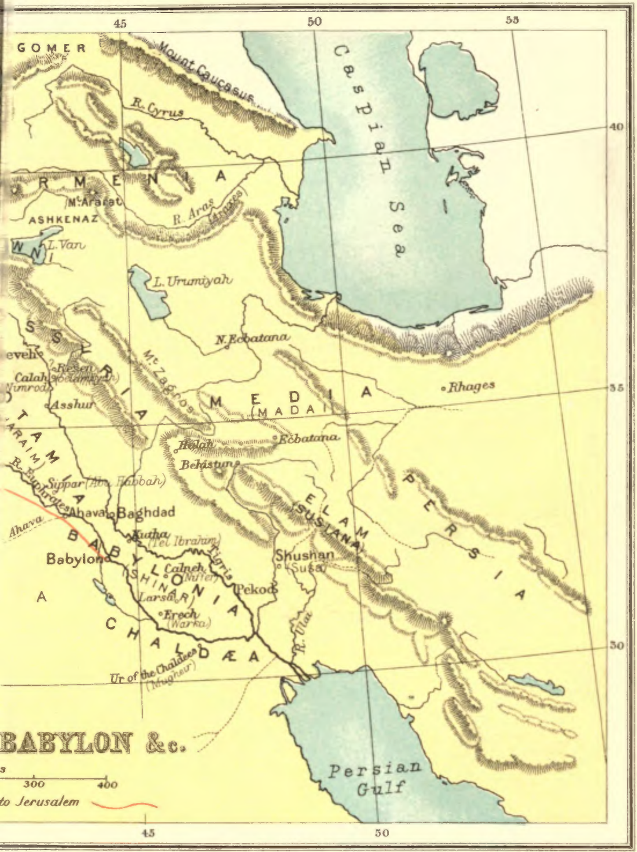
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# The Century Bible

## A MODERN COMMENTARY

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# Job

INTRODUCTION
REVISED VERSION WITH NOTES
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A. S. PEAKE, M.A.

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL EXEGESIS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
TUTOR IN THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST COLLEGE, MANCHESTER, AND
LECTURER IN LANCASHIRE INDEPENDENT COLLEGE; SOMETIME
FELLOW OF MERTON COLLEGE, AND LECTURER IN
MANSFIELD COLLEGE, OXFORD

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# PREFACE

It may seem unnecessary to publish a new commentary on Job, when the student already possesses a work by one of our greatest Old Testament scholars. But while Dr. A. B. Davidson's commentary summed up the chief exegetical and critical results reached at the time when it was written, much of first-rate importance has appeared during the twenty years it has been before the world. The thoroughly revised last edition of Dillmann's comprehensive commentary, the commentaries by Budde, Duhm, and Marshall, the special discussions in Biblical Dictionaries and Old Testament Theologies and Introductions, the investigations into the text by Bickell, Siegfried, Beer, Klostermann, Cheyne and others, more general works such as Cheyne's *Job and Solomon*, have all appeared during this period, and it has been necessary to take account of them. New problems have emerged, and many of the old problems are now before us in a very different form. If for no other reason than to place before the student the present position, the publication of a new commentary would be abundantly justified. How far the writer has done more than report and estimate the contributions of his predecessors must be left to others to determine. He has at least tried to see things with his own eyes and say them in his own way. To apportion his obligations to other scholars would be impossible, but he is conscious of special indebtedness to Duhm and Kuenen. The work by Fries, *Das philosophische Gespräch von Hiob* *bis Platon*, came into his hands too late to be used in any way.

To place the Book of Job in its proper historical setting it would be necessary to sketch the treatment of its problem in the literature of Israel. Such an outline would have been given in the present work if the writer's recent volume, *The Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament*, had not been specially devoted to this subject. The discussion of the Book of Job contained in it presents the subject in a different way from that adopted in the commentary, and may form a useful supplement to it.

MANCHESTER, *December* 30, 1904.

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## MAP

# THE BOOK OF JOB

## INTRODUCTION

# THE BOOK OF JOB

## INTRODUCTION

THIS book sets before us the history of a man, whose blameless piety is confessed by Yahweh Himself, but challenged by the Satan, who in his unresting service of God has detected so much evil masked by fair appearance, that he has become utterly cynical and lost all faith in disinterested human goodness. To prove against him that Job's piety is independent of all self-regarding motives, Yahweh permits the Satan first to strip him of all his wealth and slay his children, and then afflict him with an intolerable disease. From these trials Job emerges triumphantly, and Yahweh's confidence is splendidly vindicated. Then three friends of Job, having heard of his troubles, come to condole with him; and sit seven days in silence with him. Unmanned by their presence Job at last gives vent to the passionate complaints he has so long repressed, and curses the day of his birth. This leads to a debate between himself and his friends; they reproving him for his complaints against God and attributing his suffering to his sin, while he vehemently protests his innocence and charges God with immoral government of the world, and with malignant persecution of himself in spite of his innocence. After the debate is exhausted and Job has solemnly affirmed the righteousness of his life before the blow fell upon him, Elihu, a new speaker, intervenes to set both parties right. He recognizes the failure of the friends, but in his violent polemic against Job does little more than repeat their arguments. When his speeches are at last ended Yahweh Himself answers

Job out of the storm, and in language of matchless power and beauty brings before him the marvels of creation, and convicts him of his ignorance of the mysteries of the universe. Job is humbled and subdued, and with his penitent confession of presumption in criticizing what lay so far beyond his comprehension the poem closes. The prose narrative is then resumed, and we are told that Yahweh condemned the friends for not speaking truly of Him as Job had done. Job intercedes for them, and they are forgiven. He himself is restored to health and prosperity.

It is clear that the book is not to be regarded as historical. This is shown by the account of the heavenly councils, by the symbolic numbers of Job's family and flocks, by the escape of one messenger and one only from each catastrophe, by the exact doubling of his possessions at the end of his trial. And even more obvious is it that the speeches of Job and his friends cannot be literal reports of actual speeches, since they mark the highest point attained by Hebrew poetical genius, and since no such debate could be imagined in the patriarchal age. Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that the story is a pure romance, freely invented by the author. It was the method of antiquity to work with traditional material, and only so could the author count on securing the interest of his readers. Moreover, had they not been familiar with the story of a righteous man overwhelmed with misfortune, they could have retorted that the poem wanted all basis in fact, and therefore the problem it presented was unreal. But how much was taken from tradition, how much due to the author, it would be impossible to say. It is not unlikely that the story itself was borrowed by the Hebrews from abroad, since Job is represented as a dweller in the land of Uz, and no satisfactory explanation of his name can be derived from Hebrew.

## GOD AND THE UNIVERSE

The poet was a strict monotheist; his doctrine of God left no room for any rival deity. He understood, indeed, the spell cast on the imagination by the sun in its splendour, or the moon as it moved, radiant and majestic, across the heavens. The old nature, which in earlier ages poured forth in adoration to the glorious rulers of day and night, was not wholly dead within him, but the faint quiver of response was rigorously suppressed. Apart from this we have no reference to idolatry or to heathen deities. We are reminded of the second Isaiah as we read the descriptions of God's greatness and wisdom, His power as displayed in nature and in history. Yet they are not in Job part of a sustained polemic against heathenism, but designed to convince man of his insignificance before God and his incompetence to pass judgement on His ways. Monotheism is so completely the poet's settled belief, that it is everywhere taken for granted and represented as the unquestioned creed of the non-Israelitish speakers.

God dwells in the height of heaven, where His throne is firmly established, shrouded in clouds and darkness, so that He is invisible to man. He is not beset with human limitations, with man's short-sighted vision, or his brief life. The clouds that shut Him in do not obstruct His piercing gaze, which not only sees all human actions, but strikes through the ocean to the gloomy depths of Sheol. He is the All-wise, none can teach Him, none hope to find Him out to perfection. Nay, when man has said his utmost, he has to confess that he has but touched the fringes of God's ways.

His power and wisdom have been manifested in many forms. First, in the crushing of His foes. The ancient lore of Babylon knew of a mighty conflict between the god Marduk and the chaos-monster Tiamat and her brood. Purged of its gross polytheism the same conception finds an echo in Hebrew literature, where we read of the overthrow of the chaos-monster, Rahab or Leviathan, by Yahweh. Allusions to this occur in our book. By His wisdom God smote through Rahab, and her helpers cower beneath Him. When the sea burst turbulently from the bowels of chaos, and rushed upward, as if it would leap to the sky, God shut it down with doors and bars, set bounds for it that its proud waves should not overpass. Still with His strong hand He quiets its mutinous raging. Hence Job asks in bitter scorn if he is a sea or a sea-monster, that God must watch him so narrowly, lest, were His vigilance relaxed, Job should take Him off His guard, and reclaim heaven and earth for chaos. Once more, the poet knows of the rebel-giant Orion, bound to the sky as a constellation, yet with his bonds loosened in derision of his impotence. Or again, we read how God pins to the sky the swift serpent that causes the eclipse.

But God's greatness is shown especially in the creation and sustaining of the universe. He planned the mighty edifice, and measured and prepared the site. He laid its foundations and its corner-stone. It is supported from above, but hangs over empty space. Its lowest region is Sheol, the realm of unutterable gloom, the common home of all the dead. There, too, is the chaotic deep, from which the sea burst upward, and from which it is still fed by the springs in the ocean bed that lies between it and the nether deep. The dry land is girdled by the sea. On the face of its waters rests the vault of heaven, and its rim marks the boundary between light and the outer darkness. The dome is also supported by the mountains, which catch it at various points, and thus form the pillars of heaven. Above this dome lies the heavenly ocean, from which the torrential rain descends by a sluice cut through the solid roof. The less violent rains come from the clouds, the bottles of heaven, which are filled with water, and, when they are tilted, spill the water on the earth in the form of rain. It especially moves the poet's wonder that the filmy clouds do not burst with the weight of water that they carry. It is a similar marvel that the mountain masses of the mysterious north should hang in the void. In the sky God has placed the constellations He has made. There, too, are the chambers and granaries where light and darkness and the heavenly bodies have their home, and where the elements, snow and hail, are stored. Each day of the year has its individual existence, annually, as its turn comes round, it dawns on the world. When God appears in anger He convulses the earth and overturns mountains unconsciously; His fire, the lightning, flashes along the path He has assigned to it; the pillars of heaven rock at the thunder which is His voice; the sun suffers eclipse; the stars are sealed up in their chambers and not permitted to come forth into the sky. When, however, His breath blows the clouds away, the face of the sky grows clear and bright.

The same general theory underlies the descriptions of Elihu, but some further points call for mention. The firmament is spread out strong and polished like a molten mirror. The dark thunder-cloud forms God's pavilion, but, while black without, it is luminous at the core, for it is all filled with the light in which God dwells. This light shoots in lightning-flashes from the cloud, or streams forth as the Aurora in the northern heavens. God takes the light in His hands, concealing them in it from the gaze of men, and sends the shaft of lightning home to its mark. As He utters His voice in His pavilion men hear it as thunder. The waters are drawn up from the sea into the clouds, which, though so heavily laden with moisture, float free in the sky. Then the water is poured out in the form of rain. The storm comes forth from its chamber, the cold from its granary.

The poet has not a little to say of other spiritual beings, who are called the Elohim race ('sons of God'). There is mention made of a 'first' or archetypal 'man,' older than the hills, who shared in the council of God; the conception is similar to that of the Divine Wisdom in Prov. viii. 22–31. But he is not brought into connexion with 'the sons of God.' They are older than the creation of the earth, for, when the foundations were laid, the morning stars sang together and the sons of God raised the ringing shout. These heavenly beings are by no means free from blame. The heavens are not clean in God's sight. He puts no trust in His servants, and charges His angels with folly; He judges them that are high. We read further that God makes peace in His high places. At stated periods these spirits present themselves before Yahweh, to give an account of the way in which they have discharged their duties. One of them is named 'the Satan' (not to be identified with the devil), and his function is to oppose man's standing before God. He has therefore to test the characters of those reputed righteous, and to detect the sin which lurks under the mask of virtue. Unlike what seems to have been the case with the others of his class, he had no locally defined sphere in which to work, but freely ranged over the whole world as his province. Elihu adds one interesting development: a doctrine of intercessory angels, of whom there are a thousand. These may graciously instruct a man in the reason for his affliction, and redeem him from the destroying angels.

If the sons of God are thus impure in God's sight, how much more is this true of man! He is a creature of flesh, dwelling in a house of clay. As the woman-born, his origin is unclean; he is abominable and corrupt. Moreover his life is wretched; his days are brief and full of trouble. He is crushed as easily as the moth, short-lived as the delicate flower. Swiftly he passes from the poor pleasures life has to offer to the dense and dreary darkness of Sheol, the home appointed for all living, from which there is no return. There the bloodless shades drag out an apathetic semblance of life, in a peace whose intolerable tedium could seem welcome relief only to the bitterest anguish. There all earth's distinctions are unknown, all its dearest ties are forgotten, even fellowship with God is no longer possible. The pale phantom is stung into a dim consciousness by the pain of his body, as it goes to corruption in the tomb, or quails before God's gaze, when, in great convulsions of nature, Sheol is stripped to His view.

It is on earth alone, then, that man and God come into relation with each other. Man's duty is to fear God and turn away from evil. And God, because He is the All-powerful and the All-wise, is also the righteous Ruler, who gives to man the due reward of his deeds. At this point, however, the problem of the book emerges, for it is just the dogma of God's righteousness which Job is forced to dispute.

## THE PROBLEM OF THE BOOK

Job had met the loss of wealth and children with pious recognition of Yahweh's right to take back what He had given and with blessing of His Name. When his wife's faith had failed in his second trial, the sufferer, in his excruciating pain, rebuked her temptation to blasphemy with the noble words, 'Good shall we receive at the hand of God, and evil shall we not receive.' But the unswerving integrity was only the continuance of the old relation into conditions ultimately incompatible with it. It was an axiom of theology that the lot of the righteous was blessed, and Job was assured of his uprightness and fidelity to God. But now the axiom, so long verified in his own felicity, had proved unequal to the strain of facts. Not all at once could the deep-rooted faith of a lifetime be plucked up, and the inference be drawn that the God, who tortured the innocent, could not Himself be moral. Yet the spirit, caged in the inexplicable, must sooner or later break from the blind alley into a clearer if unkindlier air. Even before his friends came to him he felt himself slipping from the fear of God. He craved for their sympathy to restore his fainting spirit, as the parched caravan craves for the stream in the desert. But the calamities that had made his need so desperate had dried up the springs. In the presence of his tried companions the sufferer was confident that the long-repressed complaint might find free utterance; wise and tolerant, they would not narrowly scrutinize the wild words of his despair, but soothe and reconcile him to his pain. But they failed him miserably, and, when he hungered for sympathy, offered him a flinty theology. Not, indeed, that they were callous to his suffering; they uttered their piercing lamentations, and, after demonstrations of their sorrow, sat in silent grief and compassion seven days. It is possible that their silence expressed the moral condemnation of so great a sufferer that their dogma demanded. Yet Job betrays no consciousness of this; the unrestrained complaint with which he breaks the silence proves that he confidently cast himself on their kindness. And while the friends must have inferred his sinfulness from his disasters, the debate opens with the assumption of his fundamental integrity.

The artistic movement of the discussion has been disguised by the dislocation of the speeches in the third cycle of the debate. When they have been restored to their primitive condition the scheme followed by the author seems to have been as follows. In the first round of speeches the friends ply Job with the thought of God, Eliphaz dwelling on His transcendent purity, Bildad on His inflexible righteousness, and Zophar on His inscrutable wisdom. Failing to impress Job along this line, the friends in the second cycle of speeches paint lurid pictures of the fate of the wicked; after a life spent in torments he comes to a swift and miserable death, and his posterity is rooted out. In the third cycle Eliphaz directly charges Job with flagrant sin. But, instead of permitting the other friends as before to follow in the same strain, the poet secures variety by letting the debate double back on itself. The third speech of Bildad (xxv. 2, 3, xxvi. 5–14) repeats the theme of the first cycle, the incomparable greatness of God; the third speech of Zophar (? xxvii. 7–10, 13–23) repeats the theme of the second cycle, the miserable fate of the wicked.

The friends have little to say beyond the general principles just mentioned. The righteousness of God is not clearly disengaged from His power and wisdom. Right and wrong are just what the Almighty decrees them to be. Hence they find it hard to conceive the distinction on which Job insists, and utterly refuse to accept it, since Job's righteousness was naturally less certain to them than God's. Nor have they suffered themselves to be disturbed by the facts which seem to Job so eloquent of God's misgovernment. But they had not had Job's experience to take the scales from their eyes and make them sensitive to the world's inexplicable pain. It is not the case, however, that they interpret suffering simply as punishment. In his first speech Eliphaz depicts for Job's encouragement the blessedness of that man whom God chastens. The friends probably saw in Job's affliction both punishment and discipline, till his rebellious words forced on them the conviction that his sin was deeper than they had surmised.

It must strike the reader as strange that the antagonists develop their arguments with such little reference to the case advanced by the other side. A Western poet would have made the speakers submit the positions maintained by the opponent to a more searching criticism. But the poet is an Oriental, with far less care for pure reasoning. The friends have their settled beliefs about God and His government; nothing Job can say will move them. Hence in the first two cycles of the debate the three friends take substantially the same line, with very little reference to anything Job may have urged. Even the great passage xix. 25–27 might just as well not have been spoken, for all the influence it has on their subsequent speeches.

Similarly Job, in several of his speeches, contents himself with some words of blistering sarcasm, and then pursues his own train of thought, without reference to what his antagonists have said, though when the case has been stated by all three of the speakers he pulverizes it. He neglects them because he is wholly engaged with God.

It is this preoccupation with God which gives Job's speeches their marvellous fascination. Quite apart from all the lofty qualities that make the book a perennial delight to lovers of poetry for its own sake, there is a situation whose development is followed with breathless eagerness. Here, indeed, in the history of a soul, rather than the discussion of a problem, lies the supreme interest of the book. The detailed movement from stage to stage of the debate is exhibited in the special sections devoted to this purpose in the commentary. At present a more general sketch may suffice.

Job's problem is, in the first instance, personal. Why has God sent such undeserved calamities on His faithful servant? In his first rebellious utterance he had barely referred to God. But the reply of Eliphaz, with all its considerateness, stung him to the quick, since it took for granted his guilt and rebuked the temper he displayed. Its chief result was to drive him into open revolt against God and scornful protest against His lack of magnanimity. Yet he ends with a pathetic reminder to God that, when regrets are too late, He will long once more for fellowship with the victim He had so harshly crushed. When Bildad replies with an assertion that God cannot pervert judgement, Job bitterly assents. The Almighty sets the standard of righteousness; how can a frail mortal make good his case against omnipotence? For it is God's settled determination to make him guilty, and He who selects His victims with no moral discrimination will readily effect His purpose. If God would only release him from his pain and not paralyse him with His terror, then he would plead his cause undismayed. Resentful but wistful, he appeals to God not wantonly to destroy His creature, on whom He had lavished such pains and skill. Then with sudden revulsion, as a new light bursts in, he sees in God's care a darker design than he had guessed. All along God had planned the stroke, but He had smiled on Job to betray him, meaning to mock his confidence and make his misery extreme. And now He performs exploits of valour against His defenceless victim. Ah! why did He suffer him to be born? let him have a brief respite from torture, ere he goes for ever to Sheol's utter gloom. The reply to Zophar definitely assails the dogma of the friends. God is wise and mighty—no need to teach him such platitudes. But these qualities are displayed in destructive rather than in beneficent operations. With the friends he does not care to argue, sycophants, who would fain curry favour with God by smearing their lies over His misgovernment. As if God would tolerate such apologists, as if He dreaded to be found out! Job will fearlessly speak his whole mind, reckless though he imperils his life. Why does God refuse to answer him, and persecute him so relentlessly? Why does He bring into judgement man, so short-lived, so frail, so impure? Let him pass his brief day in such comfort as may be possible, for man dies and never wakes from the sleep of death. If only there might be a waking! if in Sheol, where there is no remembrance of God, he might wait till God's anger had ceased to burn, and then hear His voice calling him back in love, how gladly he would resume the blessed communion with Him. Vain dream of bliss! from Sheol no man can return.

Job has told all that was in his heart. He charges God outright with immorality, yet he feels that fellowship with Him is the highest good. Hence he holds together incompatible conceptions of God. The God whom he knew in the past and whom he might know again in the future, if he could still be alive to know Him, is quite other than the God of whom he has such bitter experience in the present. The hope that God might recall him from Sheol he firmly sets aside. It never establishes itself in his mind. But the feeling that his present experience of God does not reflect God's inmost character is a feeling which develops at last into the great belief, 'I know that my vindicator liveth.'

In the second cycle of the debate the friends simply describe the fate of the wicked. We need not assume that their main object was to hold up a mirror for Job, the allusions to his case are far less pointed than is sometimes asserted. If their descriptions fitted him, well and good; if not, they served the main purpose of establishing against Job the retributive justice of God. But while their side makes little advance, Job moves forward to a more peaceful state of mind. The very vehemence with which he paints God's hostility sends him by sharp recoil to seek his vindicator in Him. From the scorn of his friends he is driven to God, beseeching Him with tears to maintain his right. But with whom? With whom can it be but with Himself? Let the God of the future be surety for him with the God of the present. In his next speech this thought attains its climax. Two things are added. The prayer becomes an assurance, God will vindicate him. And though he has passed from this life, he will as a disembodied spirit be permitted to see God and know that his integrity is established. This lofty certainty is not without effect on Job's subsequent utterances. Yet it plays a much smaller part than we should have anticipated. This is partly due to the fact that at this point the personal gives way to the universal problem. For, as in the first, so also in the second round of the discussion, Job does not assail the friends' position till all three have stated it. Accordingly his third speech in this cycle is devoted to an attack on their dogma that the wicked suffer for their sin. Job flatly denies it, on the contrary they live a happy life in prosperity and die without lingering illness. To the suggestion that they suffer in the suffering of their children, Job answers that a penalty of which they are not conscious is no penalty at all.

In the third discussion Job ignores the direct assault of Eliphaz on his character, though in the course of his first speech he affirms his integrity. The greater part of this speech is occupied with another description of God's misgovernment. But he also comes back to his own relations to God, and strikes a less confident note than in xix. 25–27. It was perhaps natural that faith should not maintain itself at such a height. But we may also trace in the relapse the influence of the indictment he has urged against the moral order of the world. Though he would fain come face to face with God, and argue his cause with Him, his inscrutable, irresponsible Judge eludes him and baffles his most earnest search. The reply to Bildad's third speech (xxv. 2, 3, xxvi. 5–14) seems to have been for the most part lost. Probably it contained, between xxvii. 11 and xxvii. 12, a criticism of God's government, so bold that it was struck out as dangerous to piety. In what remains Job once more firmly asserts his integrity. To Zophar's third speech, reaffirming the doom of the wicked, Job's final speech (xxix–xxxi) constitutes the formal reply. Really it lies outside the debate. Job first describes his former happiness in the favour of God, the possession of his children, the honour of men; then sets against this the scorn and insult heaped upon him, the pain from which he is suffering, and God's cruel enmity; lastly, he solemnly declares himself innocent of any such sins as might justify his calamities, and proudly declares himself ready to confront God.

So the human debate reaches a worthy close. The friends have exhausted their case and failed to vanquish Job. Their platitudes about God's greatness he feels to be irrelevant, or rather to make His immorality worse.

Their assertion of His righteousness he denies, the plainest facts seem to him to refute it. Their personal accusations are shivered against his conscious integrity. In the course of his pleadings with God he has been distracted between God's persecution of him in the present and His kindness in the past. He has swung from one extreme to the other; now holding God's former goodness to have been carefully calculated to make his present suffering more intense, now feeling the old communion with Him to be the pledge that His love would reassert itself. And yet the fire of His wrath burns so fiercely that at best it will not die down till the victim has passed into the gloom of Sheol. Then when this inexplicable aberration has given place to God's normal mood, He will remember the servant whose love had been precious to Him. Once more He would call him back to renew the happy intercourse. But it will be too late. Yet not too late for some reparation. God will Himself establish his innocence, and he for one blissful moment will see God as his vindicator. And there is no stranger thought in the book than that God may be surety to Himself for Job. It is as though God suffers the knowledge of His future attitude to mitigate the full sweep of His anger. He is to take sides against Himself, to secure Himself against vain regrets.

The God of the past and the future was the real God, Job's God of the present was a spectre of his morbid imagination. And when God appears, we expect that this will be plain. But He wears the spectre's mask. He speaks out of the storm, laying aside none of His terror, while Job still writhes in the grip of his unresting pains. He mocks his ignorance and limitations, plying him with questions that he cannot answer, and displaying in the marvels of the universe the wisdom and might of its Creator. Now Job had all along admitted the wisdom and power of God; he had confessed that he could not meet God on equal terms, or solve one in a thousand of the problems with which omniscience could baffle his human understanding. Moreover, he had implored God to release him from pain when He appeared for the contest, and not to affright him with His terror; he had even expressed his confidence that God would not contend with him in the greatness of His power. Not only, then, does God seem to be forcing an open door, but to act less worthily than Job had expected of Him. The reader is also surprised that God does not explain to Job why he suffers, and especially why light is not thrown on the general problem of suffering.

These phenomena, which have led some to regard the speech of Yahweh as a later addition, have their sufficient reason. The speech is designed in the first place to widen Job's view. Maddened by his pain he had freely asserted that God's government of the world was immoral, a sweeping generalization, drawn in the first instance from his own experience, though he easily found numerous facts to support it. God convicts him of narrow outlook, and suggests in doing so the unimagined complexity of the problem. He alone, who has comprehended the vast universe that God must govern, has the full right to say whether He governs it well or ill. But Job, while he has spoken of God's power as displayed in the world, is quite unable to explain its phenomena. One by one God makes him ponder them, if each is an inscrutable mystery, what must be the mystery of that universe, whose government Job has so confidently condemned? If God is wise and strong as Job has confessed, ought there not to be much in His action that man cannot properly appraise? Further, Job is reminded that man does not constitute the whole of God's animate creation. All the incomparable pictures of the untamed creatures of the desert are meant to bring home to him the range of God's interests and the tender care He lavishes on such beings as are beyond man's everyday horizon. Thus man comes to a humbler view of his own importance, and learns that he must transcend his self-centred attitude, if he is to judge the ways of God aright.

A second lesson, which Job learns, is, that it is not for him to lay down the terms on which God must meet him. He had challenged God to justify the treatment meted out to him, and God ignores his demand. He is assured that God will not contend with him in the greatness of His power, and God answers him out of the storm and makes him feel how tremendous are the resources of His energy. He concludes his proud self-vindication with the words, 'as a prince I would go near unto Him,' and so he quails before the vision of God and repents in dust and ashes. That this was less worthy of God the poet would not have admitted. It might indeed seem as if the majesty of God and the taunting irony of His words were calculated to bludgeon Job into submission, rather than change his opinions by convincing his reason. But Job needed a sharp lesson of this kind to chasten his presumption; he must learn the true relation of man to God. Yet this is not the chief cause why the poet chose to introduce God as he did. It was because only thus could the desired result be fully attained. For it is not what God says that is all important. It is the overwhelming impression made on Job by the vision of God that leaves him at the end of the poem contrite and subdued. All that God says he had theoretically known before, though in all its detail it had not lived to his imagination. But now he attains an experience new in quality. 'I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, But now mine eye seeth thee; Wherefore I abhor myself and repent In dust and ashes.' And we see with what subtle art the poet has introduced those very features in the poem which critics have urged to prove that the speech of Yahweh is a later addition. For it is just the fact that Job is already well aware of what God tells him which enables us to measure the impression that the vision of God makes upon him. And it is only in accordance with his practice of anticipating later developments, when he makes Job deny that God would appear as He actually appears in the sequel.

But why does he permit God to speak and yet offer no solution of the problem? Probably he had no solution, or he would surely have so constructed his poem as not simply to indicate it, but to throw it into relief. Ought he then to have kept silence, lest he should be charged with attempting a task too hard for him, or reminding men of a misery he had no skill to charm away? There would be much force in such a criticism were peace to be won only in this way. But the author knows another path. And because he knows it the speech of Yahweh does not explain the origin of Job's suffering. Here his instinct was sounder than that of those who urge this silence in proof that the speech is later. It was not necessary for the reader to learn why Job suffered; he had known it all along from the Prologue. But it was necessary that Job should not be enlightened. Quite apart from the fact that the question in the Prologue is not one between Yahweh and Job but between Yahweh and the Satan, the poet, by revealing to Job what had passed in heaven, would have ruined the artistic effect and flung away the deepest teaching he had to give. It is imperative that Job should be left in ignorance at the end, since the lesson he learns is just this that he must trust God, even if he does not understand the reason for His action. And it is precisely this which constitutes the imperishable value of the book and its universal significance. For the explanation of Job's suffering would have been but the explanation of a single case, of no avail for others since the Satan would not court such discomfiture again. But Job, ignorant yet trustful, is a model and a help to all who are confronted by the insoluble mystery of their own or the world's pain. Even had the author so completely solved the problem that no problem remained, this would have been less precious than what he has actually given us. He had found another way. Job does not know now, any more than before, why he suffers. But his ignorance no longer tortures him, he does not wish to know. For he has escaped into a region where such problems exist no longer. He has attained peace and knows that all is well, though he does not know, or care to know, how it is possible. And it is most instructive to observe how the poet represents this inward rest to have been won. The caustic irony of the Divine questions, and the impressive array of the wonders of nature and Providence, above all the vision of God Himself, crush and humble the presumptuous critic of God's ways. Yet the very sense of his own ignorance and frailty, and of God's wisdom and might, is a return to the religious temper of mind. He has become a man of broken and contrite heart, penitent and self-loathing, who, because he knows himself to have nothing and deserve nothing, can most readily cast himself upon God, whose wisdom and omnipotence no longer crush but uphold and uplift him. Such is the way of peace the poet offers, a certainty of God, which rises above all the dark misgivings of His goodness, and is itself inspired by God's revelation of Himself.

Here, so far as Job was concerned, the book might have closed. He could go forward in pain and penury, still mocked by the base, still suspected by the good. He needed no outward confirmation of the assurance he had won in the vision of God. But is God to leave His loyal servant, who has won His wager with the Satan for Him, who has blessed Him in bereavement, and uttered the language of resignation in his pain, who has held fast his integrity, and refused to curry favour with Him by flattery, is He to leave him in misery, now that the cause for misery has passed away? What kind of a God would He be to do it? The writer could not represent Job as rewarded in another life, for though he turned with longing to the thought of immortality, he could not accept it with any confidence. Hence it was necessary for God to restore him in this life, if He restored him at all. Thus the author leaves, not only his hero, but his reader reconciled to God.

### THE INTEGRITY OF THE BOOK

Scholars are almost unanimous in the view that the book has received additions since it came from the hands of the original author. We may take the speeches of Elihu first, since there is the most general consensus of opinion about them. The great majority of scholars consider them to be an addition by a later author. The chief critics who regard them as part of the original poem are Budde, Cornill, Wildeboer and Briggs, while Kamphausen and Merx think that they are by the author of the book, but were subsequently inserted in it, the work not having contained them originally. As a rule those who attribute the speeches of Elihu to the same author as the other speeches regard them as a serious contribution to the debate, and in fact as containing the author's own solution of his problem. But the view has also been taken, e. g. by Briggs and Genung, that the author introduces Elihu as the self-confident young man, who intervenes in the debate to set both parties right, but really contributes little that is of value. This view may be safely set aside. It rests on a correct estimate of the worth of Elihu's utterances, and the extravagant self-eulogy in which he indulges leaves an almost comic impression on the reader's mind. But the inflated style in which he announces his perfect wisdom would strike an Oriental differently, and the contents of the speeches show plainly that they are seriously meant by the author, and not simply that Elihu takes himself seriously. The author gives no hint to the contrary, and the whole drift of the speeches is inconsistent with the view that Elihu is the butt of his ridicule. For while he says little that is new, he speaks in a very earnest tone, and says much that is worthy and true. It would, in fact, reflect great discredit on the author if he put such sentiments as we find in Elihu's speeches in the mouth of a man whom he introduced for the express purpose of making him ridiculous. And this is all the more evident when we observe that Elihu anticipates to some extent the line taken by Yahweh. The author certainly cannot have intended to pour contempt on the latter; had he wished to treat Elihu in this way he would have carefully refrained from putting into his mouth the ideas which are present in the speeches of Yahweh. It is interesting to notice that, according to the Testament of Job, Elihu was imbued with the spirit of Satan, and was afterwards declared by God to be a serpent, not a man, and was not pardoned with the friends, but cast into Sheol. In the Jerusalem Talmud he is identified with Balaam.

Assuming then that Elihu is to be taken seriously, the objections to the view that his speeches belong to the original poem must be considered. In the first place he is not mentioned in the Prologue or the Epilogue. It is perhaps of little importance that he is omitted in the Prologue, since he has a Prologue to himself (xxxii. 1–5), though even in it no explanation is given of his presence at the debate. But it is most significant that he is not mentioned in the Epilogue, where judgement is given on the other speakers. He is not contemptuously passed over, for we have seen that the writer considers his contribution to be real and important. Nor is it satisfactory to say that the silence implies tacit approval. For then we should have expected that even more than Job he would have been singled out by Yahweh as having spoken of Him the thing that was right. Moreover, it is difficult to believe that the author of the book would have passed a different judgement on Elihu from that passed upon the friends, so that if his speeches belonged to the original work we should have expected him to be involved with them in a common condemnation. With this, however, we have already assumed the truth of the second reason for judging the speeches to be later. This is that Elihu occupies substantially the same standpoint as the friends, and says little more than they have said already, and said better. He, as well as they, asserts that the sufferings of Job are due to his sins. It is true that he lays more stress on the value of suffering for man's discipline and on God's goodness in dealing with men. But these are not new thoughts, for in the very first speech of Eliphaz the blessedness of the man whom God chastens is described. But in any case it is true that substantially the attitude of Elihu is that of the friends. It can hardly be regarded as likely that after the case has been stated at such length by the friends, and has been conclusively refuted by Job, the author, and especially a poet of such genius, should have delayed the movement of the poem by interposing a series of speeches which are a mere repetition of what has been said before. The awkwardness is too glaring. The debate is exhausted, the friends have unfolded their arguments, Job has not only replied, but also solemnly and at length affirmed the innocence of his past life. Now it is appropriate for Yahweh to intervene. But before He does so Elihu attempts to galvanize the debate into life. Yet though he makes four speeches Job makes no reply, though it would have been easy to show the insufficiency of his arguments. The same conclusion that these speeches are later follows from the style. The literary genius displayed in them is much inferior to that shown in the rest of the book. They are diffuse and tedious, less spontaneous, and often very obscure. Budde himself confesses that the speeches as a whole make an unfavourable impression upon him, when he looks away from details, but he thinks that this may be removed if certain portions are regarded as glosses. In reply to this it may be said that if it is to be really removed we should have to cut so deep that little would be left to defend. The language also is unlike that of the rest of the book. It is strongly marked by Aramaisms, and uses words which rarely or never occur elsewhere in the poem. It would imply much too artificial a view of the poet's method to suppose that he consciously placed Aramaisms on the lips of Elihu, as appropriate to his Aramaic origin, and it is doubtful if such was his origin. It is true, however, that Budde's careful investigations have greatly modified the argument from language. Again, it is very hard to believe that the original poet should have weakened and partly spoiled the effect of the speeches of Yahweh by inserting before them Elihu's description of the heavens and their phenomena. Nor, if Elihu's speeches are an integral part of the poem, is it easy to understand the opening words of Yahweh. They are not a scornful dismissal of Elihu, for Yahweh is answering Job, and the author of the Elihu speeches, as we have already seen, did not regard them as words without knowledge. Moreover, the reference to Job and not to Elihu seems to be fixed by xlii. 3. But since they seem to refer to the last speaker, it follows that Job was the last speaker, and that the Elihu speeches formed no part of the original work. There are some differences between these speeches and those of the friends which point to difference of authorship. While the latter quote Job from memory, Elihu quotes from the earlier speakers more precisely, as if their speeches lay before him in a book. He also often mentions Job by name, though this may be partly accounted for by the fact that he is blaming both parties and may wish to distinguish. But neither the friends nor Yahweh ever mention Job by name. Elihu is also introduced at much greater length than the friends. Finally, the very fact that the speeches can go out entirely and not be missed speaks strongly for their later origin.

Budde considers that the speeches of Elihu contain the author's solution of the problem, but he states the idea of the book in a peculiar way. He argues that while Job was outwardly blameless, and regarded himself as blameless, sin slumbered in his heart, unknown to himself. God sent his sufferings to bring it to expression, and after it had been thus detected to bring him to penitence. This sin was spiritual pride, which, under the pressure of his pain, came to full manifestation in his speeches. The function of Elihu in the poem is to show Job this defect in his character and explain his sufferings in the light of it. A similar view is taken by others, among whom Cornill may especially be mentioned.

This view labours under great improbabilities. It is a serious objection to it that the contrast between spiritual pride and acts of wickedness is not plainly expressed. Elihu does not seem to confine himself to the former, and alludes to pride only in xxxiii. 17 and xxxvi. 9. This is very strange if this solution was the piece of perfect wisdom with which the author wished to solve the problem. Further, the whole poem has been strangely constructed if such is the main lesson the author intended to teach. The long speeches of Job and the friends have on this interpretation little significance. Nor does the theory cast a very favourable light on the Divine speeches. It may be fitting that after Job has proudly summoned God to debate with him he should be reduced to silence by a mere man, who meets him with merely human weapons, and cannot overwhelm him with the terror of Divine majesty. But when he has thus been abashed and vanquished by his youthful antagonist, it is hardly fitting that God should ply him with ironical questions to bring home to him the limitations of which Elihu has already convicted him. Moreover, Job himself speaks as if he had been shown his fault not by Elihu at all, but by the vision of Yahweh. A further difficulty arises out of the statements in the Prologue. There Job is presented as a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil. Yahweh himself endorses this view of his character, and affirms that there is none like him in all the earth. In His words no irony can reasonably be detected. We therefore get no hint that all along Yahweh's attention is concentrated on the latent sin of Job. If it was really His purpose to bring it into explicit consciousness the reader is set on a false track at the outset, for he understands that it is a really righteous man who is suffering, and that he suffers to vindicate Yahweh's faith in the disinterested goodness of His servant, against the Satan's cynical disbelief. Budde argues that it is Yahweh who takes the initiative in calling attention to Job, and that He was therefore already meditating the ordeal through which the patriarch had to pass. But while it is true that Yahweh takes the initiative, it is far more reasonable to think that He does so to cure the Satan of his cynicism than to probe the hidden depths of Job's heart.

Cornill urges that a poet who stated the problem so sharply and drove it to its extreme conclusions must have had a solution, or he would stand confessed as having attempted a problem beyond his powers, a tormentor of mankind, driving his sting with delight deeper and deeper into the deadly wound. Where then, he asks, is the solution to be found? Not in the speeches of Job and his friends, for in the very last speech of Job, xxix–xxxi, the dilemma is set forth with unexampled sharpness. Nor is it in the speeches of Yahweh, which give Job no friendly comforting word, but only a rough repulse, clothed in the form of irony. Nor does the Prologue provide it, for Job knows nothing of the test to which he has been submitted to prove his fidelity. And it is absolutely necessary that he should get an answer to his question. But the speeches of Elihu do provide an answer. In isolated cases of apparent unrighteousness one must not overlook the love and providential wisdom of God, which are to be seen in the normal order of the world. Further, if God does not hear men, this is not at all because He cannot or will not, but because men do not call on Him in the right way. But Elihu's chief contribution is that suffering is an educative instrument in God's hands; it leads man to self-knowledge, temptation reveals to him the sin slumbering within him, which as yet perhaps has only failed of an opportunity. If a man mistakes this educative function of suffering he commits a grave sin and is rightly punished by God, but if he recognizes it and takes it to heart, suffering becomes for him a source of endless blessing, the highest activity of the Divine love to him. Cornill regards this as the highest solution open to one who stood at the Old Testament standpoint, for having no knowledge of a future life, he had to find an answer without passing beyond this life.

We have already seen, however, that it is very hard to believe that the poet regarded it as the chief aim of Job's suffering to elicit the sin that unknown to himself slumbered in his breast. Nor can Cornill's postulate be granted that the author must have felt himself to be in possession of an intellectual solution of the problem, before he would have ventured to compose his poem. It is more probable, as we have seen already, that he had no such solution, but found peace in another way.

We may, then, conclude with confidence that the speeches of Elihu are a later addition. Nor is it hard to understand why their author added them to the original work. He was dissatisfied with the discussion as it stood. He felt that the three friends might have made more of their case. That he did not improve upon their statement is no disproof of his dissatisfaction with it, since it is one thing for a man to see the failure of his predecessors, another for him to provide anything superior, or to realize that what he has provided is not superior. But while dissatisfied with the friends, he was even more shocked by Job's language about God, which was certainly bold to the verge of blasphemy. He accordingly added the Elihu speeches, partly to protest against Job's tone, partly to draw out at fuller length the lines of thought hinted at in the other speeches, the goodness of God and the discipline of suffering. And in his estimate of Job, and the reason he alleges for his suffering, he comes in conflict also with the statements of the Prologue. That he does not take up an explicit attitude to the account of Job's suffering given in the Prologue cannot be urged as a reason for supposing that the speeches are the work of the original author, who consistently represents his characters as ignorant of the Heavenly Councils. Artistic propriety equally required that a later poet should represent his characters as similarly ignorant. It is true that he might have placed in Elihu's mouth a denial that suffering was ever to be explained as it is in the Prologue. But, while this may very well have been his view, it would have been a very bold thing to contradict the Prologue outright. The reader would not have known what to think. Since, however, he does give an explanation of Job's suffering different from that in the Prologue, we must conclude that he really disagreed with the latter and wished tacitly to condemn it.

The speeches of Yahweh have been regarded by nearly all scholars as part of the original work. This view has been rejected, however, by a few critics, especially Studer, Cheyne, and Hoonacker. The grounds of their opinion are first that the speeches adopt a line of argument which Job has discounted already, and secondly that we have no declaration of Job's innocence nor explanation of his suffering. These objections have been already substantially discussed in the preceding section. Theoretically Job had discounted the Divine speeches; in other words, he had largely granted beforehand the truth of what God now says to him. Yet the general confession was compatible with a dull sense of God's working in the details of Nature, and Job had shown no appreciation of His tender loving care for His sentient creatures. In both respects the speeches correct his limitations. But the great experience, which overwhelmed and assured him, was the realization of God Himself. It has further been explained already why the author does not represent God as giving any explanation of Job's sufferings or any solution of the general problem.

It has been urged by Hoonacker that the author of the Elihu speeches cannot have been acquainted with the Divine speeches or the Epilogue. Otherwise he would not have added his own contribution. He gives the following reasons: (*a*) The author would have felt no difficulty as to the silence of the friends if God Himself intervened. (*b*) He regards Job as not merely lacking in wisdom but as impious (xxxiv. 7, 8, 34 ff., xxxv. 16); when writing xxxiv. 34 ff. he had not before him the story of Job's repentance and pardon. (*c*) Elihu does not admit that God can grant Job's wish to debate directly with Him; he considers it useless to expect that God should deign to answer him; accordingly Job's hope was absurd, and his complaint of God's refusal an attack on His majesty (xxxiii. 12 ff.). (*d*) Elihu believes that Job can still be refuted, and in xxxii. 13 f. deprecates the conduct of the friends in leaving Job to God, not to man. The facts, however, are capable of a much simpler explanation. Not only did the author of the Elihu speeches dissent from the Prologue, he wished also to attack the original poet for the impropriety of which he had been guilty in permitting God to participate in the debate. Not only did it compromise His dignity in the eyes of this author, but the introduction of a *Deus ex machina* seemed unnecessary. He felt himself quite equal to solving the problem, and reverence forbade that God should be brought in to solve a situation that man could solve by his own power. While the recognition of this polemical purpose amply accounts for the facts, there are positive considerations in its favour. If the poem as read by this author did not contain the speech of Yahweh, how did he hit on the thought that the friends were leaving Job to be vanquished by God? There was no suggestion of this in their speeches; it is an inference from the two facts, their silence and the reply of God. Moreover, how strange that another supplementer, quite ignorant of the author of the Elihu speeches, should also have hit on the idea of Yahweh's intervention in the debate, in this case to execute, and not to deprecate, it. It is not unlikely that the author disapproved of the Epilogue. Still, the difficulty here is much slighter than that of harmonizing it with the speech of Yahweh.

While, however, we may with confidence regard the words out of the storm as an integral part of the original poem, we should with the great majority of scholars, look on the descriptions of behemoth and leviathan as a late insertion. The reasons for this conclusion are given in the introduction to that section (pp. 329–331), where it is also pointed out that we should probably combine the two Divine speeches into one, as also the two penitent confessions of Job.

Objections have been urged against the Prologue and Epilogue. The former, however, is indispensable; apart from it the subsequent debate would be unintelligible. The objection that the explanation of Job's suffering expounded in it is not put forward in the poem, not even in the speech of Yahweh, has been met already. The speech was not intended to explain why Job suffered, and could not have explained it without losing much of its value. Dr. Marshall thinks the Prologue is later than the poem, since the poem asserts the sole causality of God, and therefore leaves no room for the activity of the Satan. But, quite apart from the question how far we may identify the views of the speakers with those of the author, there seems to be no such advance in speculation as would prevent our ascribing the Prologue to the same age as the poem. The Satan is strictly subordinate to Yahweh, and acts only by His permission. It is just because it is his special function to strip off the cloak of fair pretence that he disbelieves in disinterested goodness. He has no personal ends to serve, rather, as a loyal servant, he would guard his Master against the abuse of His goodness. Naturally, holding his opinion so obstinately, he will gladly ruin Job to prove himself right. It is not so much that he hates his victim as that he hugs his own cynicism; though there was a malicious zest in so piquant an experiment, to say nothing of the gambler's instinct. Really the relation he sustains to God is substantially the same as that held by the lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets, and this does not occur in a late passage. Nor can the present writer grant that the theodicy of the Prologue is the sublimest in the book, inasmuch as Job does not in his view suffer for the glory of God, but to vindicate God's faith in the genuineness of his piety.

Several have objected to the Epilogue on the ground that the happy ending cannot have been added by the original writer. It moves too much, they think, in the region of the old ideas, against which the poem is a passionate protest. Job receives a vulgar compensation, and the old doctrine of prosperity for the righteous is reaffirmed. But this is perhaps too modern in its sentiment, and it overstates the case. For the Epilogue traces no inevitable connexion, as the old theory did, between character and circumstances; how could the author have done so, with the story of Job's sufferings before him? It was his concern, not to deny that sin and adversity, righteousness and prosperity, often went together, but to affirm that they did not invariably accompany each other. After all, the Gospel itself takes up essentially the same position as the Epilogue. It has, further, been pointed out that the function of the Epilogue is to leave the reader content with God's conduct; it is added for His sake rather than for Job's. Some have felt that the Satan ought to have been brought forward to confess the disinterested character of Job's piety. But such a formal confession the author may well have felt to be unnecessary. The Testament of Job represents Job's sufferings as going on for many years, while his wife bravely wins a livelihood for him, but only at the last yields to the instigation of Satan and bids Job curse God. Job rebukes her and then challenges Satan to contend with him, not with a frail woman. Then Satan broke forth into tears, and said, 'I yield to thee who art the great wrestler.' The desirability of a confession of defeat on the Satan's part was felt early.

It is quite possible that the author borrowed both Prologue and Epilogue from an earlier book, which may have been known to Ezekiel (xiv. 14), though his reference to Job could be explained by knowledge of an oral tradition. Some of the arguments adduced in favour of this view are weak. But it is certainly very difficult to believe that the poet should himself have written xlii. 7, 8. God had introduced His speech with a description of Job's utterances as 'words without knowledge,' and this strikes the key-note of His whole speech. Job responds in language of contrition, loathing his words. How strange then that God should immediately after say that Job had spoken of Him 'the thing that is right,' a judgement hard to reconcile with the tone and explicit statement of God's speech or with Job's confession. Again the friends had been misguided, but they were sincere and God-fearing men, why then should God be so angry at their 'folly' that He can be appeased only by sacrifice and Job's intercession? Usually it is said that Job's bold facing of the facts of life was more congenial to God than the friends' attempts to conceal them. This, however, does not escape the difficulty. We cannot avoid the conclusion that for God to represent Job's speeches as right, and those of the friends as impious, does not harmonize with His attitude to Job in the Divine speech or with the line taken by the friends in the debate. It is more probable that this judgement originally referred to a wholly different set of speeches. The 'folly' of the friends reminds us of that of Job's wife, an impiety consisting of a temptation to curse God. Job's right speech about God is more likely to have been of the character of his utterances in the

Prologue. Probably, then, in an earlier Book of Job another type of debate stood between the present Prologue and Epilogue; the friends talking 'folly' or impiety, inciting the sufferer to abandon his integrity, while Job spoke that which was 'right,' the language of pious resignation. The poet had to cut out this dialogue and substitute his own. But he left the Epilogue as he found it, since, though he would not have chosen such terms to express the character of the speeches, they could be harmonized with his general intention to applaud Job and condemn the friends, as, indeed, they usually have been harmonized.

Several other problems are raised with reference to various parts of the book. They are discussed in the course of the exposition; it will be convenient to register the results here.

xxv–xxvii. Bildad's third speech probably consisted of xxv. 2, 3; xxvi. 5–14. We should eliminate xxv. 4–6 as a gloss, based on xv. 14–16. Job's reply consisted of xxvi. 2–4, xxvii. 2–6, 11, 12. The greater part of his speech, containing probably a very bold criticism of the Divine government, stood originally, it would seem, between xxvii. 11 and xxvii. 12. Zophar's third speech is largely preserved in xxvii. 13–23; possibly 7–10 belongs to him, though 8–10 may be a gloss.

xxviii. is a later addition, and not to be assigned either to Job or Zophar.

xxiv. 1–24 may possibly be a later addition, or perhaps substituted for a less acceptable speech, but it may quite well be genuine in the main, though verses 18–21 are in any case impossible on Job's lips, and are probably an insertion.

xxx. 2–8 probably stood originally in connexion with xxiv. 5 ff.

Other dislocations are xxviii. 7, 8, which should probably follow xxviii. 12; xxix. 21–25, which should follow xxix. 10; xxxi. 38–40, which should come at an earlier point in the chapter, though it is quite uncertain where; xxxiii. 4, which should follow xxxiii. 6; xli. 9-12, which should follow xl. 24. Perhaps vi. 27 should follow vi. 23. xxxi. 1 is out of place in its present context, but an emendation is suggested in the note on that verse to remove the difficulty.

### The Text

The text of the book has been till recently regarded as very well preserved. But for some years past a very different estimate has been formed by several scholars, and the received text has been made the subject of much emendation. It is not easy to treat the question with profit in a work intended largely for the English reader. But some reference must be made to it, especially since the difficulties of interpretation raise so often the problem of the text.

Since Hebrew was written without vowels, and many of the consonants were much alike, it was quite easy, and in fact has not been uncommon, for one letter or group of letters to be mistaken for another, and this was helped by the comparative ease with which letters could be rubbed and partially or entirely obliterated. Mistakes might also arise through the carelessness of the copyist, or through defective hearing if he wrote from dictation. Deliberate alterations might be made to avoid anthropomorphisms or expressions in other ways objectionable, or to smooth roughnesses and make the style trim and tame, in harmony with the scribe's canons of literary elegance. The criteria for detecting and healing corruption are partly supplied by the divergence of the versions (especially the Septuagint) from the Hebrew, partly by considerations of inherent probability. Our Hebrew MSS. present practically the same text, and have probably been ultimately derived from one copy, in whose favour all rival texts were suppressed.

The use of the Septuagint (LXX) is complicated by the fact that the true text of the LXX is nearly four hundred lines shorter than the Hebrew. The missing lines were supplied by Origen from the translation of Theodotion, and although the asterisks with which he marked these additions were largely retained in five MSS., it was not till the publication in 1889 of a Coptic translation of the LXX that the actual extent of its text was determined. Bickell, who had previously explained the omissions in the LXX as due to the obscurities of the Hebrew, or the theological objections taken to some of Job's utterances, or the sheer looseness of the translator's rendering, now argued that the four hundred lines in question were added to the original poem (see also Hatch, *Essays in Biblical Greek*, pp. 215–45; this was subjected to a searching criticism by Dillmann in an article entitled *Textkritisches zum Buche Hiob*, published in the *Sitzungsberichte der K. Akademie*, Berlin, 1890, pp. 1345–73). But Bickell went a great deal further. Many lines were struck out by him which are found both in Hebrew and LXX. Partly his treatment was occasioned by material, partly by formal objections to the present text. It might be that he detected inconsistencies, or needless repetitions, or excessive diffuseness, and on the ground of these material objections eliminated the portions that offended his reason or his taste. Cases of this kind have to be settled each on its merits. But his formal principles postulated a regularity in structure which could tolerate no deviation, and the text had perforce to be fitted into his scheme. The original poem consisted, in his judgement, exclusively of four-lined stanzas. The present poem is, as a matter of fact, written mainly in couplets, two of which may very frequently be combined to form a quatrain. But sometimes the number of couplets is odd, not even; in that case, when the section is distributed into quatrains, a recalcitrant couplet is left, and has to be expunged, or by extensive alterations six lines have to be manipulated into four. But we have several instances where the couplet is replaced by a triplet. In this case similar measures have to be employed. Nor is this all, for not only have there to be so many lines to a stanza, but each line must be built on a given pattern ; it must in fact be written in a certain metre. Now with all the freedom of scansion which Bickell exercises, very many lines will not as they stand conform to his rules ; and they must be made to conform, or if that prove impracticable, be deleted. The outcome is that the poem has to lose not merely the four hundred lines absent from the original LXX, but an enormous number besides, and that very extensive alterations are made in those that are left.

The theory has met with little favour, though it has been adopted wholesale by Dr. Dillon in his *Sceptics of the Old Testament* (1895). This work contains a translation of Bickell's text, and exposition of the ideas of the poem as thus restored. It called forth a very valuable article by Dr. Driver in *The Contemporary Review* for Feb. 1896, which may be earnestly commended to those who wish to see convincing reasons for not adopting the theory. This is not the place for any detailed discussion, but a few general remarks may be offered. The LXX text does little to remove the stumbling-blocks of the Hebrew, and it creates worse difficulties of its own. It retains the passages which give rise to the most serious questionings, while its omissions dislocate the movement of the poem. The theory that quatrains alone are legitimate rests on evidence altogether too slender, and the couplets of which they are composed are often unequally yoked together. Triplets may fall under suspicion, but only if material as well as formal objections can be urged against them. As to metre, the whole subject at present lies in too much obscurity to warrant textual changes on this basis alone. A line may be suspicious because it is abnormally long or abnormally short, but beyond this, in Job, at any rate, it is not safe to go.

It no doubt often happens that the Versions help us to correct the Hebrew, sometimes by presupposing, at other times by giving the clue to a better original. In other cases the critic must resort to conjecture, in which the parallelism or the demands of the general sense may guide him to a satisfactory correction. Naturally the process is attended with much danger of error; but few, who have any knowledge of the results it has achieved in skilful hands, will be inclined to make light of it. The numerous studies devoted of late to the emendation of Job have certainly not been without substantial result, as will be clear from the commentary.

## THE DATE

It is needless to waste many words on the old-fashioned view that the poem dates from the time of Moses or earlier. The antique colouring is proof, not of the book's antiquity, but of the author's art, in conforming his presentation to the age in which the hero lived and suffered. The absence of explicit reference to Hebrew law or history ought never to have been quoted to prove the author's ignorance of them, since he would have been a poor artist indeed to let his characters exhibit familiarity with the institutions of a people that belonged to a period later than the time in which they were placed. It would be more plausible to think of the reign of Solomon, a period of intellectual activity and intercourse with foreign nations. But the phenomena of the book hardly permit us to place it earlier than the time of Jeremiah. The decisive argument in favour of this view is the stage of religious reflection represented by it. It was not till the age of Jeremiah, when the state was breaking up under the assault of Babylon, that the old belief in the association of prosperity and righteousness began to give way before the facts which disproved it. The destruction of Jerusalem and the Exile made the question a burning one. It is hard to believe that it can be as early as the time of Jehoiachin or Zedekiah, in which Dillmann places it. Nor indeed can it well be as early as the beginning of the Babylonian

Exile, the latest date which Dillmann is prepared to leave open as a possibility. The problem is no longer in its elementary stage. It has been long pondered and discussed, and this agrees best with a date considerably later than that of Jeremiah. Several scholars have placed it towards the close of the Exile, making the author contemporary with the author of Isa. xl–lv. A comparison of the two writers discloses correspondences which cannot be accidental. There are especially close points of contact between the figure of Job and that of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. The Servant is to be identified with the historical Israel, which had died in the Exile and was to be restored to life by a return from captivity and re-establishment in its old home. The meaning of its suffering and death is closely connected with its mission to the world. That mission was to bring to the Gentiles the knowledge of the true God. When the Servant has been restored from exile, the Gentile nations perceive the error they had made in connecting its calamities with its sin. Israel, that had been faithful to the true God, had suffered; the idolatrous Gentiles had escaped. The sufferings of Israel are accordingly interpreted as vicarious; by its stripes the nations are healed. The suffering of the innocent, the misconception of the suffering as penal, the restoration, are all paralleled in the case of Job. But the profound explanation that the suffering is vicarious is not to be found in Job. This has led many scholars to the belief that Job must be earlier than the Servant poems. Could he have neglected the interpretation of the problem offered by them? He had sought long for an answer to the question which wrung his heart; could he have been blind or indifferent to a solution so illuminating? The argument is telling, but by no means conclusive. The author may have found no help in the thought of vicarious suffering. But, apart from this, he may well have hesitated to transfer this explanation of the calamities which had befallen a nation, elect to a world-wide mission, in furtherance of that mission, to the calamities of an individual. Job has no such sphere of universal significance to fill. Israel may suffer for the nations, but what would Job's vicarious suffering avail? We need not therefore regard this as an insuperable objection to the view that Job is dependent on the Second Isaiah, if there are reasons for adopting this conclusion. And there are such reasons. While both powerfully assert the power and wisdom of God as shown in the Creation, this forms part of a sustained polemic against heathenism in Isa. xl–lv, whereas in Job it is a securely-won doctrine, taken for granted by non-Israelitish speakers, while idolatry is left almost entirely out of account. In other words, the conflict with paganism, which fills so large a place in the literature of Israel down to the Return, and is not completely extinct even later, is here left out of account. And the relation of Job to the Servant of Yahweh really leads to the same result. For Job is not, as some have argued, to be identified with the Servant; he is not the nation, but an individual. There can be little question whether the problem of suffering was raised first in connexion with the nation or with the individual. The recognition of the individual was quite late in comparison with that of the nation, the suffering of the one created a problem sooner than that of the other. Attention was at first too much absorbed by the colossal disasters of the nation for the individual case to receive attention. The dependence lies with Job rather than with the Second Isaiah, since the figure of the suffering Servant was directly created by the contemporary circumstances, and the author needed to take no suggestion for it from elsewhere. The author of Job carries the question a stage further from the nation to the individual.

The post-exilic date is confirmed by other considerations. The angelology is late, its affinities lie largely with the doctrine of angels in the literature subsequent to the Return. The Satan occurs in no early literature, but only in Zechariah and Chronicles. The inwardness of its ethics points to a time later than Jeremiah's prophecy of the New Covenant. The diction is late rather than early, Aramaic, and to a certain extent Arabic, words being found in it, and there are many words which occur elsewhere only in the latest parts of the O. T. It is unfortunate that in several instances, where Job and other pieces of literature exhibit marks of dependence, no judgement can be expressed with any confidence as to the side on which dependence lies, equally competent critics holding opposite views. Moreover, some of these related sections of the O. T. are themselves of very uncertain date. xii. 7-10 suggests that the author may have had Gen. i. 20-25 in mind. A clear case of dependence is that of vii. 17, 18 on Ps. viii. 4. Job bitterly parodies the Psalmist's question. The eighth Psalm is often thought to presuppose Gen. i, which belongs to the Priestly Document promulgated in 444 B. C. We could in that case hardly place Job earlier than about 400 B. C. The close affinities with Malachi suggest a similar conclusion, which is perhaps the most probable view. We need feel no hesitation in adopting a date subsequent to Ezra's reformation, on the ground that on the uncongenial soil of legalism such a poem could not have arisen. The Book of Jonah and some of the Psalms, to say nothing of Ecclesiastes at a later time, show plainly how little we can speak of any uniformity in post-exilic Judaism. There is no need to come much below 400 B. C. Oscar Holtzmann has argued in Stade's *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, ii. 348-52, that the book can be accounted for only by postulating the influence of Greek thought; and that the dialogue form is due to imitation of the dialogues of Plato, who also pondered on the cause of human suffering, and before whose mind there rose the greatness and beauty of the world. Accordingly he places the book in the Ptolemaic period. His arguments, however, have rightly met with scant approval. Siegfried (*Jewish Encyclopaedia*, vol. vii. p. 197) appears to think that it belongs to the time of the Maccabees, and considers that

xv. 20 ff. seems to allude to the fate of Alexander Jannaeus. We cannot say that such a date is impossible. But there is no cogent reason for adopting it. Moreover, the additions made to the book imply a fairly long history.

## THE ART OF THE BOOK

There has been much fruitless controversy as to the literary label that should be attached to the book. We cannot force this splendid fruit of Hebrew wisdom into a Greek scheme, and it is really futile to discuss whether it is a drama or an epic. It is itself. We may more profitably linger on some of its literary qualities. Like Hebrew poetry in general its most striking formal characteristic is its parallelism. Usually the second line repeats the thought of the first, though sometimes it states the contrast to it, or perhaps it completes the thought begun but left unfinished in the first. The parallel structure brings to the ear the same kind of satisfaction as rhyme, but unless very skilfully used it is apt to pall in a long poem. In this book its monotony is largely overcome by the poet's blending of various types of parallelism and by the occasional use of triplets instead of couplets.

The poet is a master of metaphors, taken from many spheres of life. The work of the farm suggests a figure to describe those who sow iniquity and reap trouble, or the comparison of death in a ripe old age to the coming into the barn of the shock of corn in its season. The fate of the wicked is likened to that of the stubble driven by the wind from the threshing-floor or the chaff chased by the storm. Job compares himself in his prosperity to a tree drinking up the water by its roots while its branches were refreshed by the dew. His words were awaited by the assembly as thirstily as the parched clods look up for the rain. In the long life he then anticipated he compared himself to the phoenix. He longs for death as the slave panting under the heat longs for the cool evening which will bring him his rest; or again, death is sought with the eagerness that characterizes those who dig for hid treasures. The wicked is compared to the Nile grass suddenly cut off from the moisture and withering rapidly; his trust can as little support him as a flimsy spider's web. Man's brief life is like the flower opening in beauty and suddenly cut down, the swiftness with which it passes is illustrated by the weaver's shuttle, the courier, the speed of the light skiffs on the river, or of the eagle as it swoops on its prey. The completeness of his disappearance from earth when he passes into Sheol is compared with the vanishing of the cloud. The failure of streams supplies him with several metaphors; thus Job illustrates the disappointment he had experienced from the friends by the caravan that comes to the channel down which the turbid torrent swept in winter, only to find the brawling stream scorched out of existence in the summer heat, and perish in the search for new supplies. The failing waters furnish an apt metaphor for the irretrievable ebbing away of life, while the forgetfulness of past trouble is illustrated by the oblivion into which they run. Military figures are common. More than once Job describes God as an archer with Job for His target. He tortures him with suspense, letting His arrows whistle about him, before He sends them home. Or He is a wrestler of gigantic strength with Job for His antagonist and victim. A third illustration is that of a fortress with a breach made in the walls through which the enemy pours. The fate of the wicked is set forth under the figure of an attack on a den of lions, the old lions have their teeth dashed out and perish for lack of prey, while the whelps are scattered abroad. There are many other metaphors for the evil destiny that awaits the godless. His branch is not green, or it is dried up by the flame, or again his root is withered beneath, and his branch cut off above; he is like the vine that fails to bring to maturity its unripe grape, or the olive shedding its flowers. His path is all beset with snares, the hell-hounds of terror chase him, but which ever way he turns they meet him, closing on him from every side. While he flees from the iron weapon the brass bow pierces him with its arrow. He is driven away as utterly as a dream of the night. While wickedness is a dainty tit-bit in the sinner's mouth, held fast that all its delicious sweetness may be enjoyed, and only reluctantly let go, yet it will turn to the gall of asps within him. Natural phenomena are described by graphic images. Clouds formed the garment and swaddling band for the infant sea, new born from the bowels of the chaotic deep. The clouds as they float in the sky are like bottles filled with water, which when they are tilted spill the rain. The dawn is a woman peeping over the crest of the hills, and the rays of light are her eyelashes. Darkness is a coverlet in which the wicked are shrouded from sight, suddenly the light comes and twitches the covering away so that the wicked are shaken out of it and stand revealed in the glare of day. And under the light the world lies all clear cut like clay freshly stamped by the seal, or like a body clothed with its close-fitting robe. The caracole of the horse is compared to the leaping of a locust.

The book is studded with the most exquisite descriptions. The whole of Yahweh's speech is a sustained effort of the highest genius, unsurpassed in the world's literature. The animal pictures are like instantaneous photographs, catching a characteristic attitude, and fixing it for us in the most vivid words. And with what power and beauty are the marvels of the universe set forth! The laying of its foundation amid the songs of the morning stars and the joyous shouts of the sons of God; the birth of the sea, and the staying of its tumultuous heavenward leap; the punctual dayspring, flooding the world with light; the springs that feed the sea from the nether deep; the gates of Sheol; the dwelling of light and darkness; the stores of hail and snow made ready for God's battles; the sluice cut through the firmament by which the torrential rain descends; the frost that turns the streams to stone; the rain that falls on the waste afar from man; the mighty constellations, obedient to God's behest; the lightning with its purposeful movement; all pass before the mind as God unrolls the panorama of the universe. And fully worthy to be mentioned with this is the wonderful description in Bildad's third speech, closing with the awed confession that we stand but at the outskirts of God's ways, where the deafening thunder of His power is mercifully heard from afar. Less noteworthy than these is the fine description of God's power and wisdom in ix. 5–10. Or take the vision of Eliphaz, where the old terror masters him as he narrates it. How vividly it all passes before us; the preparation in the musings on his night trances; the fear that sets his bones quaking, the cold breath across the face, the hair on end, the vague thing that his straining eyes could resolve into no shape he could name, the dead silence and then the thin voice. Or, for its quiet soothing beauty, the peroration to the same speech. And what a sense of peace steals over the weary as he reads the longing words in which Job describes the untroubled calm of Sheol, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. How full of dismay and yearning is the plaintive assertion of the hopelessness of man's fate (xix. 7–21)! How graphic Bildad's picture of the terrors that surround the sinner and the evil destiny to which he is doomed!

The poet's power of irony is displayed most conspicuously in the speech of Yahweh. But examples may be culled from the debate. Thus Job bitterly asks God what is frail man that He must so narrowly observe him, or whether he is himself a sea or sea-monster that God should set a watch over him. The friends' arguments he satirizes with pungent scorn, their proverbs are proverbs of ashes, their wisdom consists only of platitudes; he tells

Bildad that he really must have been inspired to make one of his speeches. One of his most biting and delightful phrases is aimed at them, 'How irritating are words of uprightness.' Bitter indeed is the question whether he had taxed their friendship by asking them to do anything for him, as if he had thought friendship could stand such a test!

His pathos is deeply moving. Job feels acutely the unkindness of his friends, he even turns to them with the appeal, 'Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends!' But it is little that he says to the friends in this strain. It is rather to God that his pathetic pleadings are addressed. 'My friends scorn me, But mine eye poureth out tears unto God.' With such care had God fashioned him, with such kindness preserved him, why does He wantonly destroy him? Soon he must die under God's stroke, but by and by God's present mood will pass, then He will seek for His servant in love, but alas! too late. Especially the swift movement to death elicits some of Job's most touching words, and the thought of the dreary interminable darkness that awaits him.

The character-drawing of the book is not highly developed. The friends are distinguished to some extent, but they have no very clearly-marked individuality, and they take very much the same line. The character-study of Job is more subtle, as the interest of the poem centres about the struggle of his soul caught in the web of mystery and pain. On this, however, it is not necessary to repeat what is said elsewhere.

### THE AUTHOR

It is not needful to add many words. We know nothing of the author save what we learn from his book. He was a Jew, and lived probably in the south of Judaea on the edge of the wilderness. The restraints of civilization were irksome to him; he loved freedom, and sympathized deeply with the wild life of the desert, far from cities and their bondage. He had travelled in the desert, probably in a caravan, had marked the streams swollen in the snow's thaw, and how they vanished in the summer heat. Possibly he had himself been in danger of the fate he describes in vi. 18. He had seen and pitied the wretched outcasts, without home or clothing, huddled under the rocks for shelter from the drenching rains, famished because food was so scarce, and driven to theft to keep themselves and their children alive. He had journeyed to the sea, which seemed in its turmoil to seek escape from its bonds, and had seen how its waves tossing never so high always fell back, and how it could not pass its appointed bounds. Herein he had recognized the restraining might of God. To the desert-lover the uncongenial sea appeared an impious thing. Probably he had travelled as far as Egypt, though he may have known it only by report. He had often watched the constellations, and the marvels of nature had roused his curiosity and awe.

But he had pondered far more deeply the ethical and religious problem presented by the moral order of the world. With a flaming hatred of wrong and tender pity for the oppressed, he saw the triumph of the wicked and the misery of the just. He was familiar with the current doctrines, and knew how they ignored the most patent facts. A truly religious man, he had found his heart drawn to God by the irrepressible instinct for fellowship with Him, driven from Him by the apparent immorality of His government. He had known what it was to be baffled in his search for God and to feel himself slipping from the fear of the Almighty. An intellectual solution he had not been able to reach. But in humble submission to God's inscrutable wisdom, and in a profounder sense of fellowship with Him, he had escaped into the region of unclouded trust. It is a wonderful victory of Jewish piety that our author, who saw the anguish of the world as clearly, felt it as acutely, exposed it as relentlessly as the author of Ecclesiastes, yet unlike him rested at last in God.

## SELECTED LITERATURE

The commentaries and special discussions are so numerous that no useful purpose could be served by naming a tithe of them. Of the older literature it may suffice to mention Schultens and Rosenmüller, both written in Latin. The chief modern German commentaries and expositions are those of *Ewald, *Delitzsch, Kamphausen, *Zöckler (in Lange), Merx, Hitzig, Hoffmann, Dillmann, Budde, Duhm, Fried. Delitzsch, Ley. [Those marked with an asterisk have been translated into English.] Of English expositions no more need be named than those of A. B. Davidson (Vol. i, 1862, all published), and of the same author in the *Cambridge Bible*, Cox, Elzas (Jewish), Watson (*Expositor's Bible*), Bernard (Christian Jew), G. H. B. Wright, Bradley, Gibson (*Westminster Commentaries*), Marshall (*American Baptist Commentary*), Addis (*Temple Bible*). Several of the commentaries contain translations. Other translations are: (*a*) into German, Reuss, Baethgen (in Kautzsch), Bickell (from his reconstructed text, accessible to the English reader in Dillon's *Sceptics of the Old Testament*), Duhm; (*b*) into French, Renan and Reuss; (*c*) into English, Gilbert, *The Poetry of Job*, Genung, *The Epic of the Inner Life*, and Rotherham in *The Emphasized Bible.*

Special discussions are to be found in the Introductions to the O.T., the Bible Dictionaries, Histories of Israel, and Old Testament Theologies. The following may be added: Godet, *Old Testament Studies*; Budde, *Beiträge zur Kritik des Buches Hiob*; Giesebrecht, *Der Wendepunkt des Buches Hiob*, Froude in *Short Studies*; A. M. Fairbairn in *The City of God*; C. H. H. Wright, *Biblical Essays*; Green, *The Argument of the Book of Job Unfolded*; Cheyne, *Job and Solomon* (and numerous articles in the *Expositor*, *Expository Times*, and *Critical Review*); Duhm in *The New World* for 1894; Bruce in *The Moral Order of the World*; Davison, *The Wisdom*

*Literature of the Old Testament*; Peake, *The Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament.*

For textual criticism the books and articles mentioned in the section on the text, and in addition Siegfried's edition of the Hebrew text in the *Polychrome Bible* (the English translation with commentary has not been published, the author's general conclusions may be found in the articles 'Wisdom' in Hastings' *Dictionary* and 'Job' in *The Jewish Encyclopaedia*); Beer, *Der Text des Buches Hiob*, and *Textkritische Studien zum Buche Hiob* in Stade's *Zeitschrift*; Klostermann, article 'Hiob' in Herzog, *Realencyklopädie* (third edition). Recent commentaries deal pretty fully with this side of the subject; Duhm especially is rich in emendations.

Since a mere list of names is of little use to the student without further guidance, a few remarks are offered on the selection of books. If he is restricted to English works, he might take the chapter in Driver's *Introduction*, or the article by Margoliouth in Smith's *Dictionary* (second edition), or by Davison in Hastings, for his starting-point. For detailed exegesis he would have, in addition to the present work, the two commentaries by Davidson. Of these the former is, so far as it goes, by far the more valuable, and Davidson's failure to complete it is a permanent impoverishment of our English exegesis. Its critical point of view was rightly abandoned later, but in every other respect it is to be preferred. In no later work did the author seem as though he could 'recapture That first fine careless rapture.' Still, the disappointment that the later commentary provokes is simply created by comparison with the author himself, and by the fact that in the twenty years which have elapsed since it was written many new problems have emerged. He could next take Cheyne's *Job and Solomon*, and then his article in *The Encyclopaedia Biblica.* He should be on his guard against the excessive literary analysis in both, especially the latter, and against the radical textual criticism, which, however, is very little affected by his Jerahmeelite theory that has since attained such a remarkable development. He could then turn to some of the special studies mentioned, and the recent fresh and suggestive commentary by Marshall.

If, however, he can read German, he should study Kuenen's valuable discussion in his Introduction, and take Dillmann's commentary as the basis for his detailed work. To this he should add Budde and Duhm, the latter of which is among the most suggestive and original commentaries on the book ever published. All three of these will be much more useful to the reader who knows something of Hebrew than to those who are ignorant of it.

## EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS

**A.** The main portion of the book, including Prologue and Epilogue, not improbably incorporated from an older book.

**B.** The speeches of Elihu.

**W.** The poem on Wisdom (ch. xxviii).

**L.** The Behemoth and Leviathan sections.

**M.** Later additions.

Dislocations and wrong allocations of speeches cannot be indicated by these symbols; they are pointed out in the chapter on 'The Integrity of the Book.'

It is unnecessary, and in this case not very satisfactory, to give a brief table of contents. The exposition of each section is preceded throughout by a full analysis.

# THE BOOK OF JOB

## REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

# THE BOOK OF JOB

[A] THERE was a man in the land of Uz, whose 1

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i. 1-5. The character, wealth, and family of Job. The unbroken merry-making of his children, and his scrupulous precautions to atone for possible impiety occasioned by it.

**1.** The author plunges at once into his story, without preliminary moralizing or anticipation of his subject. He introduces his hero, with a bare mention of his name and home, and then describes to us his character and possessions, fittingly giving the place of honour to the former. For he wishes to set his problem before us in the sharpest form ; there must be no room for the misgiving that the sufferer's afflictions are the due reward of his deeds. And thus to emphasize how inexplicable, on the current theory of retribution, were his calamities and disease, he depicts him as one 'blameless and upright, God-fearing and turning away from evil.' Alike to himself and to others this was attested by his worldly prosperity. A numerous family and wonderful wealth proclaimed to all how high he stood in the favour of Heaven. For the author does not wish simply to move us by the spectacle of sudden and immense disaster, moving though such a spectacle must always be, and trebly pitiful when disaster is undeserved. He accentuates as much as possible the prosperity of Job, that he may make his tragic change of fortune utterly bewildering to himself and all too plain to the world. For long happiness had beguiled him into a sweet certainty of God's favour, and, in the light of his conscious innocence, a blow so crushing could be at best a dark mystery, but to gloomier moods a devilish mockery. It was all the more hideous that it struck him deeply in his honour. In the world's judgement a clever hypocrite had been at length unmasked, whose sin could be measured by the overwhelming greatness of his punishment. As in a Greek tragedy, the suspense is deepened for the reader by his knowledge from the first of the facts hidden from the sufferer and his friends. Since he is undistracted by any doubt of Job's piety, and knows that it is the Satan who has achieved his ruin, his attention is concentrated on the real dramatic interest, the struggle of a soul, conscious only of its own rectitude, to adjust its exquisite but unmerited pain to the theistic beliefs it has previously entertained. While the author emphasizes not only the excellence of Job's character but the

name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright,
2 and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And

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greatness of his wealth, we see that his goodness was more eminent even than his substance, for while he was 'the greatest of all the children of the East,' there was none to compare with him for character and piety in all the earth.

**the land of Uz.** The situation is uncertain. According to Gen. x. 23 Uz was connected with the Aramaeans, and according to Gen. xxii. 21 with Nahor. This suggests that it should be sought in Naharina (the so-called Aram Naharaim), on the east of the Euphrates. This is favoured by the inclusion of Job among 'the children of the East,' and perhaps by the fact that the raid on his cattle was made by the Chaldeans. It would agree further with this that Bildad the Shuhite (cf. Gen. xxv. 2, 6) may have belonged to the Sûḫu, who, as we learn from the inscriptions, lived on the right bank of the Euphrates, south of Carchemish. Elihu is a Buzite (xxxii. 2), and Buz, like his brother Uz, is represented in Gen. xxii. 21 as a son of Nahor. He is further described as of the family of Ram. This, however, favours the connexion of Uz with Edom, for Ram, according to 1 Chron. ii, was the son or brother of Jerahmeel (cf. Ruth iv. 19), and the Jerahmeelites, like the Calebites, lived on the south of Judah. Still, it is possible to regard Elihu as an Aramaean, if Ram is either an abbreviation or a mistake for Aram. Although the account of Elihu is a later addition, it is important as very early evidence of the position to which Uz was assigned. Fried. Delitzsch thinks that Uz occurs, as the name of a district, in the cuneiform inscriptions, but Winckler reads differently. If Delitzsch is correct the exact position is still disputed. He fixes the situation near Palmyra; Dr. Francis Brown, however, says it must be near the Orontes. But many scholars seek for the land of Uz not to the north of Palestine at all, but to the south-east, in the neighbourhood of Edom. In Gen. xxxvi. 28 Uz is named as a grandson of Seir the Horite, in other words, Seir is closely connected with Edom. This is the case also with Lam. iv. 21: 'Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz.' Among those who are named in Jer. xxv. 17-26 as drinking of the cup of fury, we find 'all the kings of the land of Uz' (ver. 20); Edom, however, is mentioned separately (ver. 21). Eliphaz was a Temanite, i. e. he came from Edom; and he bears an Edomite name (Gen. xxxvi. 4). We can hardly, in any case, identify Edom and Uz, but they must have been neighbouring countries. It is difficult to decide which land of Uz is to be regarded as Job's home. Possibly the traditional connexion of 'wisdom' with Edom should incline the balance in its favour.

**whose name was Job** (Heb. *Iyyōb*). The name has been there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand 3 sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the children of the east. And his sons went and 4 held a feast in the house of each one upon his day; and they sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to

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very variously explained. Among the meanings assigned to it are: 'the hated one,' 'the depressed,' 'the penitent,' 'the pious.' The author can hardly have invented it, since there is no hint in the book that he saw in it any fitness to Job's character or career. It no doubt belonged to the traditional story, and the Hebrews may have explained it to mean 'the persecuted one.' But if the name of the hero was derived with the story from abroad, it would probably be vain to attempt the discovery of its original meaning.

**perfect.** The author does not mean that he was sinless. It would be better to translate 'blameless'; he could not be charged with wickedness towards God or man. In this and the following words the author would show us that Job fulfilled the ideal alike of religion and morality. Yahweh Himself endorses this estimate of Job's character (ver. 8, ii. 3), Job insists on it vehemently, as the one thing that remains firm, amid the collapse of his earlier convictions, and the friends at times confess it.

**2.** Foremost among the blessings of heaven stood a numerous posterity. The numbers, seven and three, are chosen to show his perfect good fortune in this respect, while the preponderance of sons over daughters reflects the Eastern estimate of women. In the enumeration of Job's possessions the writer operates with multiples of seven and three, and of ten, their sum.

**3. substance** (marg. 'cattle'). The latter is the usual sense of the word, and generally its use is restricted to sheep and horned animals; sometimes, as here, it is used in a wider sense. The she-asses were more valuable than the males on account of the foals. To look after so large an establishment a very numerous body of servants was necessary.

**4.** The author gives here an example of Job's anxious piety, and at the same time prepares the way for the catastrophe narrated in verses 18, 19. The meaning seems to be that Job's children lived a life of constant festivity. Every day the sons met in each other's houses beginning with the eldest, and going to the others in rotation. Apparently they were not married, since no mention is made of their wives, but each had his own house. The three

5 drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified

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sisters, who probably lived with their father and mother, joined their brothers each day at the feast. The feast at each brother's house seems to have lasted only a single day, and there was a regular cycle of feasts, lasting seven successive days. When one cycle of feasts was ended Job offered sacrifices, and a new series began. Some think this cannot be the meaning, but that feasts were held more rarely, each feast lasting several days, and ending with sacrifice. 'His day' would in that case probably mean his birthday (cf. Hos. vii. 5). But the language of verses 4, 5 does not favour the view that the feasts occurred at irregular intervals. We are not reading prosaic history. The life depicted is like that of princes in fairy tales, a never-ending round of mirth, disclosing at once the great prosperity of Job and the happiness of his family. 'His day' means the day that falls to each in the order of seniority, the eldest son entertaining on the first day and the youngest on the seventh.

**5.** There is no touch of moroseness in Job's piety, nor any wish to check their innocent joy. So week by week he lets the full round of festivity be completed, without any interference. But while his piety is not gloomy, it seeks to avoid the mere possibility of evil. Open blasphemy of God he does not suspect among his children. But he knows the danger that when wine has weakened the normal self-restraint, irreverence or a still darker impiety may rise and be cherished in the heart. So lest any of his children should have sinned in this way, Job sends for them at the end of each cycle of feasting and sanctifies them. Having thus prepared them for the holy rites, he offers burnt offerings for each, and thus atones for their possible transgressions. The author insists on this for a twofold reason. He wishes to deepen the impression of Job's piety. Others might wait till they knew sin had been committed, Job is so scrupulous that he guards against the possibility that it may have been committed. Moreover, while little regard was paid in antiquity to any transgression save in act or word, the inwardness of Job's religion is displayed in that he feels the guilt of a sin in thought. The second reason is that he wishes to show that the catastrophe which destroys Job's children cannot be accounted for by their sin (as Bildad hints, viii. 4), since it occurs on the very day when the atoning sacrifice has been offered for them (verse 13).

We should perhaps translate, 'when they had let the days of the feast go round.' The point of time indicated is when one cycle of festivity had ended and the next had not yet begun.

**sent and sanctified them:** the meaning is probably that them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and renounced God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

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Job sent for them and sanctified them when they came, hardly that he sent a priest and sanctified them, as Fried. Delitzsch supposes. The sanctification is not something effected by the sacrifice, but the ceremonial preparation for it, cf. 1 Sam xvi. 5. In what this ritual purification consists we are not told, but probably in ablutions and either the washing of their garments or the putting on of robes specially reserved for religious rites. The thought underlying this is that on the one side the stain of the world must be removed before the worshipper enters the presence of God, on the other side that the contagious holiness of altar or sanctuary renders garments worn by the worshipper in his approach to God unfit for use in the ordinary duties of life. This inconvenient holiness might be washed out of the robes, but it was simplest to keep a special set of clothes for holy occasions (see Gen. xxxv. 2; Exod. xix. 10-25; Ezek. xliv. 19; Isa. lxv. 5, 'Come not near to me lest I make thee holy'; 2 Kings x. 22).

**offered burnt offerings.** The sacrifice is not the technical sin-offering of the Priestly Code, but it atones for sin. The distinguishing feature of the burnt offering is that it was completely devoted to God, no part of the victim being eaten by the worshipper, as was usual in early sacrifices, which were communion feasts strengthening or re-knitting the bond between the Deity and the worshippers. In the burnt offering the idea of physical communion has fallen into the background, and the thought is rather of the efficacy of a victim wholly surrendered to God. In the later days of national disaster the burnt offering assumed a wholly new prominence, and prepared the way for the later development of a specific sin-offering. It is to be noticed that Job acts as priest for his own household; probably he offered a burnt offering for each of his ten children. The sacrifice takes place on the morning when the feast is in the eldest brother's house.

**renounced** (marg. 'blasphemed'). The word in the Hebrew text means properly 'to bless.' Probably this is the sense intended here, in which case we must regard it as a euphemism for 'curse,' a similar usage existing in colloquial English. What seems to be meant is not a deliberate cursing of God, for which antiquity would have expected the death penalty, but such irreverent feeling about God as wine might engender. While Duhm thinks the author is himself responsible for the euphemism, 6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to

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some other scholars believe that the author wrote 'cursed,' but that a scribe altered it out of reverence. The scribes have let it stand, however, in Isa. viii. 21. Possibly, as Budde suggests, a milder word than 'cursed' stood here originally, as would, indeed, be more suitable. Gesenius in his *Thesaurus* took the view that since the word meant originally 'to kneel,' it might come to mean indifferently 'to curse' or 'to bless,' as a man kneels to invoke either a curse or a blessing; but we should in that case have expected the word to be frequently used in both senses. Another view, which is accepted in R. V. text, and endorsed by the high authority of Dillmann, Davidson, and Kuenen, is that since partings were accompanied with blessing, the word got the sense 'to say good-bye to,' 'renounce.' But blessings were also invoked when people met as well as when they parted (1 Sam. xiii. 10; 2 Kings iv. 29, x. 15). And 'renounced' surely implies something too deliberate. The same word recurs in verse 11 and in ii. 5, 9.

i. 6-12. In a heavenly council the Satan reports himself to Yahweh with the other 'sons of God.' Challenged by Yahweh to detect any flaw in Job's piety, the Satan urges that it is purely self-regarding, and that if Yahweh would reduce him to utter poverty he would curse Him to His face. The Satan is permitted to put Job to this test, but forbidden to smite his person.

**6.** The scene in heaven is meant to prepare the reader for the catastrophe and give him the clue to it. The closest parallel is 1 Kings xxii. 19-23. Apparently at stated seasons **the sons of God** come to the heavenly assembly to give Yahweh a report of the way in which their duties have been performed. Each probably has his fixed province, since it was thought that each kingdom had its own angel-prince (Dan. x. 13, 20, 21, xii. 1; Isa. xxiv. 21, 22). They are regarded as responsible for the order of their provinces, hence they are condemned for the misgovernment that prevails in the world, as in the apocalyptic passage in Isaiah just quoted, and in Pss. lviii, lxxxii. The term 'sons of God' suggests a wrong idea to the English reader. The meaning is not that they are sons of God, or servants of God; but 'sons of the Elohim' means those who possess the Elohim nature, those who belong to the order of Elohim, supernatural, spiritual beings, just as 'sons of men' means those who belong to the human order, and 'sons of the prophets' means members of the prophetic order. Morally, they are not regarded as more perfect than men, rather they may be described as morally neutral, our distinction between good and evil angels being unknown. Thus present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, 7 Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from

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the sons of the Elohim contract unions with the daughters of men (Gen. vi. 1–4) from which spring the Nephilim. So the spirit, who in Micaiah's striking vision becomes a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets to entice the king to his death, is a member of the heavenly host. Since with the exception of the Satan these sons of the Elohim have no further significance for his story, the author does not linger on what passes between them and Yahweh, but goes on at once to the conversation between Yahweh and the Satan.

**Satan.** As the margin says, the word means 'The Adversary.' The word is in not uncommon use in Hebrew. It has the article here, and is not a proper name, hence it would be far better to translate 'the Satan.' Although not yet a proper name, it is a title borne by a particular spirit, expressive of the function he exercises. He observes the doings of men that he may detect them in sin, and then oppose their claims to righteousness before God (cf. Zech. iii). Since it is his duty to see the bad side of human action and character (the good side perhaps falling to be observed by another spirit), he has in the exercise of it grown cynical. He has seen so much evil covered by fair appearance, that he has lost all faith in human goodness. In 1 Chron. xxi. 1 the term has become a proper name. As he appears in Job he cannot, of course, be identified with the devil, who only later found a place in Hebrew thought. He is one of the sons of the Elohim, entrusted with a special Divine commission and existing only to do Yahweh's will. Yet his cynical disbelief in disinterested goodness, and the heartlessness and malicious zest with which he suggests the trial of Job and carries it out, make it easy to account for the later development by which he came to be recognized as an evil spirit, hostile to God, and as one who tempted man not to vindicate his disbelief in human goodness, but to seduce men from God to their ruin and His sorrow.

**7.** While some at least of the other Elohim are entrusted with a kingdom for their province, the Satan is entrusted with a function, and is therefore not subject to their local limitations. Since, then, there is no fixed region of the earth, to which his energies are confined, Yahweh asks him whence he comes. In his reply he does not name any special part of the world where he has been working, for in his unresting service of Yahweh he has been visiting all parts of it.

8 walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto
Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job? for there
is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright
9 man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil. Then
Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God
10 for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him,
and about his house, and about all that he hath, on
every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands,
11 and his substance is increased in the land. But put

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**8.** Yahweh takes the initiative, but not because he is already planning Job's trial, with the view of bringing to light the spiritual pride, which, unknown to Job himself, lurked in his heart. He Himself endorses the judgement which the author has passed on Job, certainly with no touch of irony, but meaning what He says. Moreover, in ii. 3 He charges the Satan with inciting Him against Job. It is therefore clear that His reason for calling his attention to Job is that He may cure him of his cynicism by pointing to so conspicuous a refutation of it.

**for:** we should perhaps adopt the marginal translation 'that,' since **for** suggests that the contemplation of an upright character would be pleasing to the Satan.

**in the earth:** echoes the Satan's words in the previous verse. He had ransacked the world, had he ever found Job's peer?

**9.** The Satan has long ago 'considered' Job, and tacitly concedes that Yahweh's description is just. But if he cannot deny his piety, he can at least impugn its motive. The spoiled darling of Heaven may well seek to please his Master and keep his place. Small wonder that he is so devoted to God, when God has made devotion so worth his while! It is rather interesting that some Old Testament writers think abundant wealth a snare. Thus the writer of Prov. xxx. 5-9, reproving the agnostic utterance in verses $1^a$-4, prays that he may have neither poverty nor riches, the former leading to theft and blasphemy, the latter to the denial of God (cf. Deut. xxxii. 15). It is a Christian commonplace, at least in theory.

**10.** The description is such as to bring out in the strongest way how great are Job's possessions and how absolutely secure he is from attack. 'Thou' is emphatic, hast not Thou, the all-powerful, so protected him that no evil can strike him? There is not the least chink in the hedge, that Yahweh has set about him, through which disaster can steal upon him.

forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will renounce thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto 12
Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

And it fell on a day when his sons and his daughters 13
were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's

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**11.** But let Yahweh tear down the hedge, and leave His servant bare to the blast, let Him strip him of all that he has. Then Job will be His fawning sycophant no longer, but will curse Him to His face.

The literal translation of the last clause is, 'if he will not curse Thee to Thy face.' Originally the formula was one of imprecation, If such or such a thing does not happen, may evil befall me. In its present form it is incomplete, the invocation of evil being omitted. The phrase has thus become a strong assertion, 'he will certainly curse Thee' is the meaning here.

**12.** Yahweh accepts the challenge, not that He may prove Job, as He is said to have proved Israel, to see what was in his heart, but that He may vindicate His servant against the insinuations of the Satan. Nor have we any reason to think that His consent implies any wish to raise Job to a loftier level of virtue through the discipline of suffering. Job is already morally blameless, and in ii. 3 Yahweh asserts that it was at the Satan's instigation that the trial had been permitted. It was not in any solicitude for Job's character, but in the need for refuting the criticism of his piety, that we are to seek the reason for Yahweh's action. It should be observed that though the Satan had said 'Put forth thine hand,' Yahweh Himself will not smite. He permits the Satan to do it, but strictly limits his power, well aware of the relentless thoroughness with which His servant will do his work.

**went forth:** intent, like Judas, on his ghastly errand (John xiii. 30).

i. 13–22. On a day when the feast is in the eldest brother's house four successive messengers announce to Job the loss of his stock, his slaves, and his children. Job is utterly prostrate with grief, but blesses Yahweh, who, as He has given, has also the right to take away. Thus he emerges unscathed from his first trial.

**13.** Budde urges this verse against the view that Job's children feasted together every day, since in that case the Satan might

14 house, that there came a messenger unto Job, and said,
The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside
15 them: and the Sabeans fell *upon them*, and took them
away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of
the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.
16 While he was yet speaking, there came also another,
and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and
hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and con-

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have availed himself of Yahweh's permission as soon as he had received it. But this does not follow. While Job's children were together every day, and could therefore at any time have been destroyed at a blow, the author meant to show that the catastrophe occurred on the very day when by Job's sacrifice any possible sin of his children had been expiated. He must leave no loophole for the explanation of the calamity as due to their sin or to Job's. Accordingly he must make the destruction take place when they met in the eldest brother's house, since on the morning of that day the sacrifices had been offered (verse 5). Besides, while the natural impression made by verse 13 is that an interval elapsed between the heavenly council and the ruin of Job, and this is confirmed by the different representation of the second trial in ii. 7, it may be pointed out that the author, both in i. 5 and ii. 1, introduces a fresh scene with the formula, 'And it came to pass on a day,' so that too much must not be inferred from it here, whereas in the second trial it would obviously have been less fitting to make the account of it a separate narrative.

**14.** In the four catastrophes that follow there is progression in the magnitude of the disasters. The first and third are inflicted by man, the second comes from heaven, and the fourth from the wilderness. Thus as he has been protected by God's hedge from assaults from any quarter, so, now the hedge is down, they are let loose on him from every quarter. Man, God, and the Powers of the Desert seem in league against him.

**15. the Sabeans** (Heb. *Sheba*) are nowhere else in the O. T. represented as a robber tribe. They are mentioned Gen. x. 7, 28, xxv. 3. The poet refers to them in vi. 19 as a trading people. Their home was in South-west Arabia.

One slave escapes from each disaster, since Job must learn what has befallen him, but only one, that his loss may be as complete as possible.

**16. The fire of God** is the lightning (2 Kings i. 12; Exod. ix. 23), here regarded as at the Satan's disposal.

sumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.
While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and 17
said, The Chaldeans made three bands, and fell upon
the camels, and have taken them away, yea, and slain
the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am
escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, 18
there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy
daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest
brother's house: and, behold, there came a great wind 19
from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the
house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are
dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

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**17. The Chaldeans** (Heb. *Kasdim*) may be the people commonly so called, but if so, they are thought of as they were before they became the great conquering people who founded the later Babylonian empire. Hommel's suggestion, 'the men of Havilah,' is quite improbable. Possibly Cheyne's suggestion that for *Kasdim* we should read *Kassim*, i.e. the Kassites of Babylonia, may be correct. The attack, as often happened, was made on three sides, to prevent the escape of the camels.

**fell** (marg. 'made a raid'). In his *Thesaurus* Gesenius explains the word here translated (*pashat*) as meaning 'to spread out,' then with the preposition used here (*'al*), as 'to rush upon,' 'invade,' with a view to booty. Recent authorities generally take the original sense as 'to pull off,' 'to strip,' and then 'to plunder,' 'to make a plundering expedition.'

**19.** The winds from the desert were notorious for their violence. Since it struck the four corners of the house it must have been a whirlwind. The term **the young men** is, of course, intended to include the daughters, perhaps the servants as well, who in any case were destroyed. Cheyne says: 'His wife, however, by a touch of quiet humour, is spared; she seems to be recognized by the Satan as an unconscious ally' (*Job and Solomon*, p. 14). But as she would naturally be in the house with Job, the device of the messenger could not have been adopted in her case, and the symmetry would have been spoiled. Besides, the author needed her for the later development of the story. She seems to have stood firm under the first trial, no small tribute to the piety of a mother, stabbed where she was most sensitive.

20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his
head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped;
21 and he said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb,
and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and
the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of
22 the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God
with foolishness.

**20.** His grief is deep and passionate, but while giving full expression to it he yields submissively to the will of God.

**his mantle,** rather 'his tunic,' the upper garment worn by people of rank.

**and worshipped.** For a beautiful parallel see the moving narrative in *Personal Memoirs of Dr. John Brown's Father*. 'We were all three awakened by a cry of pain—sharp, insufferable, as if one were stung.... We found my father standing before us, erect, his hands clenched in his black hair, his eyes full of misery and amazement, his face white as that of the dead. He frightened us. He saw this, or else his intense will had mastered his agony, for taking his hands from his head, he said, slowly and gently, "Let us give thanks," and turned to a little sofa in the room; there lay our mother, dead.'

**21.** Cf. Eccles. v. 15; 1 Tim. vi. 7. The thought is quite clear, naked I came into the world, naked I shall leave it, but the language in the latter part of it is inexact, and must not be prosaically interpreted.

The author puts the name **Yahweh** into Job's mouth, though in the speeches he avoids it (xii. 9 and xxviii. 28 probably constituting no real exceptions).

In direct reference to the Satan's prediction that Job would curse God, the author puts this word of blessing in his mouth, which not only expresses his piety in overwhelming distress, but his piety held fast in spite of his belief that it was Yahweh who was afflicting him.

**22.** The writer wishes to preclude the suspicion that in Job's grief there was the slightest element of murmuring against God. The last words of the verse are difficult. The word translated 'foolishness' properly means tastelessness, and we may accept the rendering 'foolishness,' laying stress on the moral rather than the intellectual associations of the word. The majority of commentators adopt the view of the clause taken in the R. V. It may mean, he uttered no folly against God (so the A. V. and Duhm), but though this gives a good sense, what is wanted is an expression of Job's judgement on God's conduct, rather than of the

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to 2
present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came
also among them to present himself before the LORD.
And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest 2
thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From
going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and
down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou 3
considered my servant Job? for there is none like him
in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that
feareth God, and escheweth evil: and he still holdeth
fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him,
to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered the 4
LORD, and said, Skin for skin yea, all that a man hath

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author's judgement on Job's language. The translation 'he gave God no occasion of offence' is adopted by Ewald, Dillmann, and Budde, but does not suit the context so well, for it is Job's feeling rather than God's which is in question, and the sense 'unpleasantness' is uncertain.

ii. 1–10. At a second heavenly assembly Yahweh challenges the Satan with Job's integrity, which he has vainly tried to discredit. The Satan answers that the man himself has escaped, let him be smitten in his own person, and he will curse God to His face. Yahweh permits him to inflict on Job this further trial, so he smites him from head to foot with an intolerable disease. Job repudiates, in noble resignation, his wife's suggestion that he should curse God; so once again the Satan's confident prediction is falsified.

**3.** The Satan makes no reference to his abortive attempt, perhaps because he was mortified at its failure. But when Yahweh twits him with it, he is at no loss for a reply.

**although thou movedst me,** i. e. in spite of your incitement to me to destroy him. But it would be better to translate 'so that thou movedst me,' i. e. since he holds fast his integrity it is plain that your attack on him has been futile. This agrees better with the object of the sentence, which is to assert the Satan's failure, and gives its proper emphasis to 'in vain,' which is preferable to 'without cause.' Yahweh repudiates responsibility for causing Job's former trial.

**4.** The rather vulgar language of the Satan is not exactly a sign of impudent familiarity, but the free speech of an old

5 will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now,
and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will renounce
6 thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Be-
7 hold, he is in thine hand; only spare his life. So Satan
went forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote
Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his

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servant, who does not wish to see his master imposed upon. Unfortunately the meaning of the proverb 'Skin for skin' is far from clear. Since 'for' translates in both cases the same Hebrew word, it must mean the same in both. It may mean 'in exchange for' or 'on behalf of.' Various views are suggested, a man gives one part of his skin to save another, or one limb for another, or one body for another, i. e. the body of another for his own. Duhm may be right in suggesting that the proverb arose among a people for whom skins were an important article of barter, and then gained a wider currency; the Beduin may have extorted his blackmail from the shepherd with this proverb, implying that if he wishes to save his own skin he must give the skins of his flock. So Job is skinned of all his possessions, thankful to escape with his own skin whole.

**7.** In this case the Satan smites at once when he leaves Yahweh's presence, since there is no need for him to wait. Job's disease is generally identified with elephantiasis, the symptoms of which are frequently mentioned in the references to the disease in the book. Though it ordinarily attacks the body by degrees, here it naturally attacks the whole body at once. This identification is not unanimously accepted. Prof. Macalister says: 'The characters given, however, agree better with those of the Biskra button, or Oriental sore, endemic along the southern shore of the Mediterranean and in Mesopotamia. This begins in the form of papular spots, which ulcerate and become covered with crusts, under which are itchy, burning sores, slow in granulation and often multiple: as many as forty have been found on one patient. It is probably due to a parasite, is communicable by inoculation, and very intractable even under modern treatment' (Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iii. p. 330). This view, again, is contested in *The Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, vol. xxxiv. pp. 268 ff. Dr. Thomas Chaplin identifies Job's disease with ecthyma, and certainly the description he quotes from Erasmus Wilson reminds the reader very forcibly of Job's symptoms. It is 'an eruption of large pustules dispersed over the body and limbs, beginning with itching and tingling, then bursting and forming a yellowish-grey scab. When the scab is

crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself 8
withal; and he sat among the ashes. Then said his 9
wife unto him, Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity?
renounce God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou 10
speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What?
shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall
we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with
his lips.

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removed a painful, ulcerated, and often sloughing surface is exposed, the crust which afterwards forms over it being black with thin and livid edges. It is slow in progress, very painful, and of long duration.' Dr. Masterman, of the English Mission Hospital, Jerusalem, communicates a note (pp. 278 ff.) in which he expresses agreement with Dr. Chaplin, and definitely rejects the identification with the Oriental boil, which is very common in Aleppo and Baghdad, and which, chronic and unresponsive to treatment, causes no great suffering.

**8.** It is not quite clear whether Job was sitting among the ashes in sign of grief for the loss of property and children when he was smitten with the disease, or whether, when the disease came, he went and sat on the ash-heap outside the city. The latter is perhaps the more probable. Macalister (l. c. p. 329) says that Job sat among the ashes to mitigate the itching, but it is usually thought that it was in sign of mourning for the new disaster, or else that he had to leave his home and sit on the ash-heap with the lepers.

**9.** The advice given to Job probably means, since this life of intolerable pain is all you get from God, curse God, that He may kill you outright, death being far better than the lingering torture to which you are now condemned.

**10.** By **foolish** is meant 'impious,' as in the margin (cf. Ps. xiv. 1). 'Wisdom' and 'folly' have in Hebrew a moral rather than an intellectual significance.

We should perhaps translate the second sentence, 'Good shall we receive from God, and evil shall we not receive?' with a strong emphasis on 'good.' It is a classical expression for the spirit of resignation, which recognizes God's right as He sends one, so also, if it be His will, to send the other.

**with his lips.** It is not meant that Job sinned in heart, though not in speech. It was a sin with the lips that the Satan had predicted, but Job, so far from cursing God to His face, rebukes the suggestion that he should do so as impious, and

11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: and they made an appointment together to come to bemoan him and to comfort
12 him. And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon
13 their heads toward heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

**3** After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day.
2 And Job answered and said:

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utters an expression of whole-hearted resignation. Thus the Satan is foiled once more, and is henceforth left out of account.

ii. 11–13. Job's three friends come to console him, and, after loud lamentations over his misery, sit in silence with him for seven days.

The visit of his friends naturally occurred some time later than his second trial. News of his misfortunes would have to reach them, and then the journey would probably occupy a rather long time. Eliphaz is an Edomite name (Gen. xxxvi. 4), and Teman is closely connected with Edom. On Bildad see note on i. 1. According to Nöldeke his name means 'Bel has loved.' Naamah can hardly be the Naamah in Judah, mentioned Josh. xv. 41, but where it was we do not know.

**12. knew him not:** he was so disfigured by his disease; cf. the description of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh, 'so marred as not to be human was his visage,' Isa. lii. 14.

**sprinkled dust.** They flung heavenwards handfuls of dust, which fell on their heads.

**13.** His pain and the reverse of his fortunes strike them dumb, for when grief is so crushing, what form but silence can sympathy take?

iii. 1–10. Job curses the day of his birth and the night of his conception, praying that they may be blotted out of existence.

iii. 11–19. Why did he not die at his birth and enjoy the quiet which comes to all alike in Sheol?

Let the day perish wherein I was born, 3

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iii. 20–26. Why must the wretched, who long to die, be forced to live? Such is his fate, victim as he is of unceasing troubles.

Through weary months of pain Job has brooded in silence on the cruel misery of his lot. Reduced in a day from wealth to beggary, bereaved at one stroke of all his children, smitten with an excruciating disease, tempted even by his dearest to curse God and have done with life, he had been nobly patient, submissive to God's inscrutable will. But, single-handed, he found it more and more difficult to subdue rebellious misgivings of the righteousness of God. Of his own integrity he was sure, but what of God, who rewarded with torture the loyalty of His servant? And in this trouble of his soul there had been no one to help him. The old way of escape to God had been cut off, even his wife had abandoned the struggle to hold fast her faith, the sufferer was driven back on himself. In the great conflict, in which faith and doubt wrestle strenuously for his soul, the rooted piety of a lifetime and the happy memory of God's goodness retreat, though stubbornly, before the agonizing present. He knows himself to be in danger of losing the fear of the Almighty. All the more eagerly does he clutch at his friends to keep him from sinking, only to find that he has clutched at a straw. He is at last in the presence of his peers, holy men, deeply sympathetic, bound to him by ties of long affection. At last the iron frost of his reserve can thaw in the genial sunshine of their compassion. Unmanned in their presence he can weep and not be ashamed, can 'cleanse his stuff'd bosom of the perilous stuff.' He can free his soul of all the bitterness that has festered in it, confident that his friends will not judge harshly his desperate words. They will know that frankness is best, will not misjudge it, but after he has uttered all he feels, will soothe him and strengthen him in his resignation to God's will. Vain hope! they are wise men, but no muttering of old saws will charm away this new disease, it is beyond their practice.

**1.** This chapter, as Cheyne reminds us (*Job and Solomon*, p. 15), was read by Swift on his birthday. It is modelled in its earlier part on Jeremiah's passionate imprecations on the day of his birth, and on the man who brought the news of it to his father (Jer. xx. 14–18).

**2. answered:** since silence was speech more significant than speech could have been.

**3.** Job breaks out in keen resentment at the bitter wrong in his birth, done to him by the day that he curses. According to the thought underlying the expression, a day did not cease to be when it was succeeded by the following day. The same day

And the night which said, There is a man child conceived.
4 Let that day be darkness;
Let not God regard it from above,

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would return in the following year. 'The days of the year had a kind of life of their own (cf. Ps. xix. 2) and paid annually recurring visits to mankind' (Cheyne, *Job and Solomon*, p. 16). Hence it is no mere sentimental cursing of something which has passed into a nonentity where no curse can reach it, but of something which each year returns to work its malignant will. Filled with the thought of its foul crime in bringing him to the birth, Job imprecates extinction on it, that it may be fitly punished for its guilt in the past and inflict no more misery in the future. Job's complaint is not that he was born, but that it was this baneful day which gave him birth and doomed him to misery. Had he been born on a more fortunate day, life would have been happy for him. The thought is analogous to the astrological notion of birth under a lucky or unlucky star. To the unsophisticated feeling of antiquity the curse was not merely the discharge of anger, in relief to the feelings of him who uttered it, but filled with an inherent energy which strove to realize its own fulfilment. It was taken seriously, hence the sustained passion, solemnity, and comprehensiveness of it. But behind the day of birth lay the night of conception. The night also lives its own life, utters its pregnant words, which forward or hinder the act of man. Hence the night, which spoke the ominous words 'A man is conceived,' not only disclosed a secret, but uttered a mystic spell, which sealed Job's destiny to be conceived and born. We might also translate as in A. V. 'the night *in which* it was said.' But this is much weaker, and who is supposed to be able to say this? It would become more suitable if instead of 'a man is conceived' we followed several scholars in reading with the LXX 'Behold a boy' (*lit.* male). The form *hōrāh*, translated 'is conceived,' does not occur elsewhere. Nevertheless the Hebrew text gives a finer sense, and it is fitting that Job should curse not only the day of his birth, but the night of his conception.

**man child:** properly 'man,' looking at what he essentially is, not at the stage of developments he has reached.

**4.** Bickell, followed by Cheyne, strikes out the first line. It has no parallel. In that case what follows refers to the night mentioned in verse 3. This is also the case if, with the LXX, for 'that day' we read 'that night' (so Duhm, who thinks the parallel line is to be found in the second line of verse 9). The present text seems on the whole preferable; otherwise the night gets an undue share of the curse. The LXX reading is probably due to verse 3.

Neither let the light shine upon it.
Let darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their 5
own;
Let a cloud dwell upon it;
Let all that maketh black the day terrify it.
As for that night, let thick darkness seize upon it: 6
Let it not rejoice among the days of the year;
Let it not come into the number of the months.
Lo, let that night be barren; 7

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**regard** (marg. 'inquire after'): *lit.* 'seek.' The days are summoned from their dwelling-place by God to play their part on earth and then return till their time comes again in the following year. So God commands the light, or the heavenly bodies, to come forth and take their appointed place (xxxviii; Isa. xl. 26). Let God pass this day over, when its turn arrives.

**light:** the word so rendered (*n*$^{e}$*harah*) occurs only here, and this is conjectured to be its meaning. Cheyne suggests *l*$^{e}$*banah*, a poetical word for the moon, 'let not the moon show her splendour above it.' This would require us to suppose that the night is here referred to. The poem, however, abounds in peculiar feminine nouns.

**5. shadow of death** (marg. 'deep darkness'). The margin represents the usual view of scholars, who think the word should be pointed *tsalmuth*. The R.V. text adopts the traditional theory that the word is correctly pointed *tsalmaweth* and means 'shadow of death.' This view has been recently defended by Nöldeke, who is followed by Marti, and whose arguments have convinced Budde (*Expos. Times*, viii. 384), who took the other view in his commentary. Wellhausen (*Die Kleinen Propheten*, p. 81) rejects both.

**all that maketh black.** The word so translated occurs nowhere else. It is supposed to mean 'obscurations of,' and to be derived from a root meaning 'to be black,' whose existence, however, is dubious. The text may be incorrect. Cheyne very cleverly emends with slight alteration (*k*$^{e}$*mō 'ōr*$^{e}$*rē yām*) and gets the sense 'let them affright it like those who lay a ban on the ocean.' As thus restored the line is very like a variant of the first line of verse 8, and is accordingly deleted.

**6. rejoice among.** He means let it be excluded from the festive band of the days that make up the year. The marg. 'be joined unto' represents a different pointing. It is supported by the LXX and parallelism with the next clause, but is more prosaic.

**7. barren** (marg. 'solitary'): the word properly means 'stony.'

Let no joyful voice come therein.
8 Let them curse it that curse the day,
Who are ready to rouse up leviathan.
9 Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark:
Let it look for light, but have none;
Neither let it behold the eyelids of the morning:

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Here as in Isa. xlix. 21 it seems to mean 'barren.' Job wishes that it shall do to no others the wrong it did to him, let it be cursed with sterility, so that no shout of joy may ring out upon it for the birth of a child.

**8.** Usually the verse is explained of sorcerers, skilled to cause eclipses by rousing the dragon which catches the sun in its coils, who thus bring a curse upon the day. The superstition that eclipses are caused by a serpent is very widespread. Cheyne objects that we know of no magic to produce, but only to prevent, eclipses, and also that the usual interpretation involves an incomplete parallelism. He accepts a correction by Schmidt, also defended by Gunkel, and reads *yām* 'sea' for *yōm* 'day.' He translates, 'Let them curse it that lay a spell on the ocean, that have skill to arouse leviathan.' In this case the sea, as is not unusual in those passages in the O. T. which reflect the older mythology, is regarded as the primaeval enemy of God, now crushed into submission. In the ocean dwells leviathan, to be identified or connected with Tiamat, the chaos-dragon, who fought with and was conquered by the Creator. This is a tempting explanation, since it brings the passage into connexion with several others which have a similar reference. We should probably in that case explain that these sorcerers have the power to cast the dragon into slumber or to rouse it from its sleep. The reading of the text, which is retained by Budde and Duhm, has the advantage of a closer connexion with the context; Job thinks that the professional cursers of the day would perhaps more effectually help forward his desire. It is, of course, possible that the first and second lines are not connected, and that those who curse the day are not those who cause eclipses, but those who pronounce certain days in the calendar to be unlucky. On the whole it seems best to abide by the usual view.

**ready:** better as in marg. 'skilful.'

**9. the stars of the twilight** are the harbingers of the day. Job desires that as they promise in the morning twilight that the night shall soon be followed by the day, these prophets of the dawn should fade into darkness, and that day never come to do others the unpardonable wrong it has done to him.

**eyelids of the morning.** We have here the relic of a Dawn

Because it shut not up the doors of my *mother's* womb, 10
Nor hid trouble from mine eyes.
Why died I not from the womb? 11
Why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?
Why did the knees receive me? 12
Or why the breasts, that I should suck?
For now should I have lien down and been quiet; 13
I should have slept; then had I been at rest:

---

myth, as in Isa. xiv. 12, 'O day star, son of the Dawn.' The Dawn is thought of as a beautiful woman, and her eyelids are 'the long streaming rays of morning light that come from the opening clouds that reveal the sun, an exquisite image' (Davidson). Let the dayspring from on high never visit that night is Job's prayer.

**10.** This gives the reason for his curse, the night had not prevented his conception. If we read in verse 3 'Behold a man' (see note), the reason will be that the night had not prevented his birth. It might have done so by delaying the birth to a more auspicious day, or by slaying his mother, or, according to ancient ideas, slaying himself before birth (cf. Jer. xx. 17). Ley thinks we should translate, 'Because He (i. e. God) did not shut.' But the other is much finer and more forcible.

**11.** If he had to be born, why could he not immediately have died? Duhm brings verse 16 into immediate connexion with this verse, following Beer, and deletes verse 12. The latter suggestion is less plausible than the former, since it rests on the theory that the poem was composed in four-lined stanzas, which makes this section too long or too short by one couplet, though it is also true that verse 13 does not connect perfectly with verse 12.

**12.** It was the custom for the father to take the child on his knees after birth, if he meant to acknowledge it and make himself responsible for its maintenance. The verse means why, when he was born, was he not left to perish, abandoned by his father, unnourished by his mother?

**13.** From the tossing in agony which is his present lot he turns with a great longing to the deep unruffled peace of Sheol that might have been his. The conception of the after-life was of a dreary monotony, a bare existence without colour or interest, the dim shade, languid and strengthless dwelling amid other shades, in whom the flame of life flickered on but faintly, just escaping extinction. But for all its gloom, which Job himself

14 With kings and counsellors of the earth,
Which built up waste places for themselves;
15 Or with princes that had gold,
Who filled their houses with silver:
16 Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been;
As infants which never saw light.

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can paint in the darkest hues, Sheol has one attraction for him which outweighs in his present mood all the rich interest of life. There he would at least be at rest. It is true that if the after-life has for Job no other attractions, it has also no extreme terrors; it is a pale, negative, cheerless existence, but without any element of torture.

**14.** Had he died he would now have been dwelling with the mighty dead. The phrase 'to build waste places' is not uncommon, and means to repair cities that have fallen into desolation. But this sense is too general here, since Job is speaking of something they built for themselves. Ewald, followed by several scholars, including Budde and Duhm, thought the meaning was 'who built for themselves pyramids.' The sense 'pyramids,' however, cannot be proved, and the text is probably corrupt. The best emendation seems to be Cheyne's, 'who built everlasting sepulchres' (*qibrōth 'ōlām*). Fried. Delitzsch thinks there is a sarcastic allusion to the fact that kings often abandoned to ruin the cities built by their predecessors.

For Sheol as the home of the dead we may compare Lucretius as paraphrased by Mr. Mallock (*Lucretius on Life and Death,* p. 36).

'Ancus has gone before you down that road.
Scipio, the lord of war, the all-dreaded goad
Of Carthage, he, too, like his meanest slave
Has travelled humbly to the same abode.

Thither the singers and the sages fare,
Thither the great queens with their golden hair.
Homer himself is there with all his songs;
And even my Master's mighty self is there.

There, too, the knees that nursed you, and the clay
That was a mother once, this many a day
Have gone. Thither the king with crownèd brows
Goes, and the weaned child leads him on the way.'

**15.** The reference may be to princes who filled their palaces with wealth, or to those with whom great treasure was buried.

**16.** The child born dead is **hidden,** buried at once out of sight.

There the wicked cease from troubling; 17
And there the weary be at rest.
There the prisoners are at ease together; 18
They hear not the voice of the task-master.
The small and great are there; 19
And the servant is free from his master.
Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, 20
And life unto the bitter in soul;
Which long for death, but it cometh not; 21
And dig for it more than for hid treasures;

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If, as is not unlikely, we should connect with verse 11, we should take it, 'Or why was I not as a hidden untimely birth.'

**17.** In this lovely picture of Sheol's calm, untroubled peace, it is not clear whether the wicked cease from tormenting others, or from agitating themselves. The former view is strongly suggested by verse 18, the latter is perhaps favoured by the second line of this verse (marg. 'raging').

**18.** Those who worked as captives under the pitiless lash and brutal insults of the overseer lie down to a rest they had not known on earth.

**19.** The inequalities of earth vanish in the dead level of society in Sheol. The slave has won his freedom, and his hard toil is for ever at an end. We should translate, 'Small and great are there the same,' i. e. all are in the same condition.

**20.** The exceeding sweetness of death only throws into relief the misery of his continued existence from which he cannot escape. And at length he ventures to utter the ominous word, which shows how far he has drifted from the old moorings, and strikes the note for much that is to follow: 'Wherefore does He give light?' We might translate impersonally as in R.V., but it is more probable that Job has God in his mind. The feeling forces itself to the surface that it is God who keeps him lingering in his pain. He hints in verse 23 that he owes his calamity to God. In vi. 4 the lecture he has received from Eliphaz drives him to say it outright. It is of his own bitterness that he is thinking most, though in the second line he widens his view to take in other wretches doomed to life, returning to his own in verse 23.

**21. And dig for it more than for hid treasures.** 'There is not another comparison within the whole compass of human actions so vivid as this. I have heard of diggers actually fainting when they have come upon even a single coin. They become positively

22 Which rejoice exceedingly,
And are glad, when they can find the grave?
23 *Why is light given* to a man whose way is hid,
And whom God hath hedged in?
24 For my sighing cometh before I eat,
And my roarings are poured out like water.
25 For the thing which I fear cometh upon me,
And that which I am afraid of cometh unto me.
26 I am not at ease, neither am I quiet, neither have I rest;
But trouble cometh.

4 Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,

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frantic, dig all night with desperate earnestness, and continue to work till utterly exhausted. There are, at this hour, hundreds of persons thus engaged all over the country. Not a few spend their last farthing in these ruinous efforts' (Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 135).

**22. exceedingly:** marg. 'unto exultation.'

**23.** He no longer knows which way to turn. It is God who has thus baffled him. The poet lets the second line fall from Job's lips, that the reader may be reminded how in a very different sense the Satan also charged God with putting a hedge about Job. There protection, here arrest and bewilderment.

**24. before I eat:** this gives no suitable sense. The margin 'like my meat' is better, or we might translate, 'instead of my meat'; his sighing is his daily bread, cf. 'my tears have been my meat day and night.' Duhm omits the verse.

**25. the thing which I fear cometh.** We should translate, 'If I fear a fear, then it overtaketh me, and whatever I dread cometh upon me.' Such is his misery that he has only to dread some evil to find it overtaking him. The margin, 'the thing which I feared is come,' gives a wrong sense, for Job's happiness in his time of prosperity was not undermined with dread of the future. Rather, 'I said, I shall die in my nest' (xxix. 18). Similarly the past tenses in the margin of verse 26 give an incorrect sense.

iv, v. Through seven days the friends have sat in silence, while the sufferer has been writhing in his pain. They, too, have no clue to its meaning, but only their general theory of life and their former acquaintance with Job to guide them. And these forces pulled in opposite directions, the former suggested that such

If one assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? 2

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accumulated sufferings implied some heinous sin as its cause, while the latter testified to his integrity. Yet not only have they watched his demeanour during the seven days of silence, but they have heard his deep imprecations, his bitter complaint at his birth, his longing for death, even the hint that God is responsible for his trouble. This speech, which was no balanced, calculated utterance, but the wild outpouring of a desperate man's soul, pained and shocked his friends, who heard and criticized in cold blood. They still believed in Job's essential piety, but felt that other elements had also to be reckoned with. Some grievous sin must lie behind his suffering; moreover, the temper in which he was bearing his punishment was wholly unbecoming to a religious man. There is no fault to be found with Eliphaz for the tone of his speech. It is very considerate and tender; but his theology has misled his diagnosis. Hence it served only to exasperate Job into open revolt, and thus to lead the friends to a darker view of his state. So the breach widens and the character-drama develops, as the factors implicit in the situation become clearly defined.

iv. 1–11. Eliphaz cannot refrain from replying to Job. How strange that one who has sustained others should break down himself at the touch of trouble. His integrity should give him confidence, for experience shows that the innocent do not perish, but it is the wicked who are consumed by the blast of God's anger.

iv. 12—v. 8. The speaker has himself learnt in an awe-inspiring vision that not even the angels, and how much less frail mankind, can be accounted righteous by God. The foolish comes to an evil end through impatience.

v. 9–16. Job would do far better to commit his cause to God, who, mighty in power and inscrutable in wisdom, exalts the lowly and overthrows the crafty in their scheming.

v. 17–26. How blessed the man whom God chastens, so let Job receive humbly the chastening God inflicts on him. For if He smites, it is but to heal him, and bestow the richest happiness upon him, delivering him from all misfortune and blessing him with the fullest prosperity, his long life rounded off with green old age and a quiet death.

**2. wilt thou be grieved:** *lit.* 'wilt thou be weary.' The word may refer to physical weariness; is Job too ill to listen to remonstrance? Or it may be metaphorical, in which case it may mean either to be vexed, or to be discouraged. The context suggests that it is not of physical exhaustion that he is thinking. Although he feels that he may irritate or depress his friend, the tone of Job's speech leaves him no alternative but to reply.

But who can withhold himself from speaking?
3 Behold, thou hast instructed many,
And thou hast strengthened the weak hands.
4 Thy words have upholden him that was falling,
And thou hast confirmed the feeble knees.
5 But now it is come unto thee, and thou faintest;
It toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.
6 Is not thy fear *of God* thy confidence,
*And* thy hope the integrity of thy ways?
7 Remember, I pray thee, who *ever* perished, being innocent?
Or where were the upright cut off?
8 According as I have seen, they that plow iniquity,

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**3, 4.** It is the more surprising that Job should give way, since he has in the past so effectively strengthened the suffering and despondent. With his clear, deep insight into the ways of God he had helped the wavering and steadied them when tempted to rebel at the mysterious harshness of God's dealings with them. Let him now apply to his own case the lessons he has so successfully taught to others. What Eliphaz fails to understand is that Job's disease needs not an irritant but an emollient. A vivid realization of the pain he is suffering, the imagination which will enable him to put himself in Job's place, a tender sympathy, a generous comprehension, these were the qualities that would have soothed the sufferer and rekindled his flickering trust in God. 'To him that is ready to faint kindness *should be shewed* from his friend' (vi. 14). 'A glimmering wick he will not quench.'

**5.** 'One would really suppose Job to have broken down at the first taste of trouble' (Cheyne, *Job and Solomon*, p. 18).

**6, 7.** Eliphaz means quite seriously that Job is a pious and upright man. Grave slips may, indeed, have tarnished his record, yet he is genuinely good, the set and drift of his soul are towards God and righteousness. Then let this conscious integrity be his encouragement. For if he will bethink himself of the teachings of history and experience, he will discover that the upright do not perish, discipline and punishment are not pushed to the point of destruction. 'Fear of God' recalls the description of Job as 'one that feared God'; 'the integrity of thy ways' recalls 'that man was perfect and upright.'

**8.** Rather, as Eliphaz can testify from his own experience, it is

And sow trouble, reap the same.
By the breath of God they perish, 9
And by the blast of his anger are they consumed.
The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, 10
And the teeth of the young lions, are broken.
The old lion perisheth for lack of prey, 11
And the whelps of the lioness are scattered abroad.
Now a thing was secretly brought to me, 12
And mine ear received a whisper thereof.

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those who deliberately sow mischief, after carefully preparing the ground to receive it, who invariably reap a harvest of trouble. Cf. Hos. viii. 7, x. 13.

**9.** Their destiny is to **perish** in the wrath of God. Job, it is true, might seem to have sunk into trouble as deep as that referred to in verse 8. But as his life has been different, so also will be his fate; he will not 'perish' as they do (verse 7).

**10, 11.** The wicked are compared with a den of lions, and their destruction with an attack made upon it. In this attack the lions are not slain, but the teeth of the fully-grown are broken. No longer able to seize and devour his prey, the lion dies of hunger, and the cubs which cannot provide for themselves, and have lost the care of their dam, are scattered abroad. Five different words are used here. 'Fierce lion' is rather roaring or hoarse lion. 'Young lions' are lions in their early vigour. Elzas says, 'The Arabs boast that they have four hundred names by which to designate the lion.' Similarly G. E. Post, Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, iii. 126.

Merx and Siegfried strike out verses 10, 11, and Duhm thinks verses 8–11 are a later interpolation. It is true that the drift of them is not quite clear, as they might be intended to suggest that Job's calamity is due to his sin, and hold up a warning picture of the fate to which he is moving. If so, the verses are probably not original here, for this is not the position Eliphaz takes up at this stage of the debate. But it seems quite easy to suppose that here Eliphaz is contrasting Job's case with that of the wicked, and the strictly unnecessary amplification in verses 10, 11 has parallels elsewhere.

**12.** He enforces the truth upon Job that no creature can be spotless in God's sight, not even the angels, who are pure spirit, far less men, formed out of the dust and so frail that they are crushed with ease. This lesson he had learnt for himself in an experience the horror of which is renewed as he relates it. The description

13 In thoughts from the visions of the night,
When deep sleep falleth on men,
14 Fear came upon me, and trembling,
Which made all my bones to shake.

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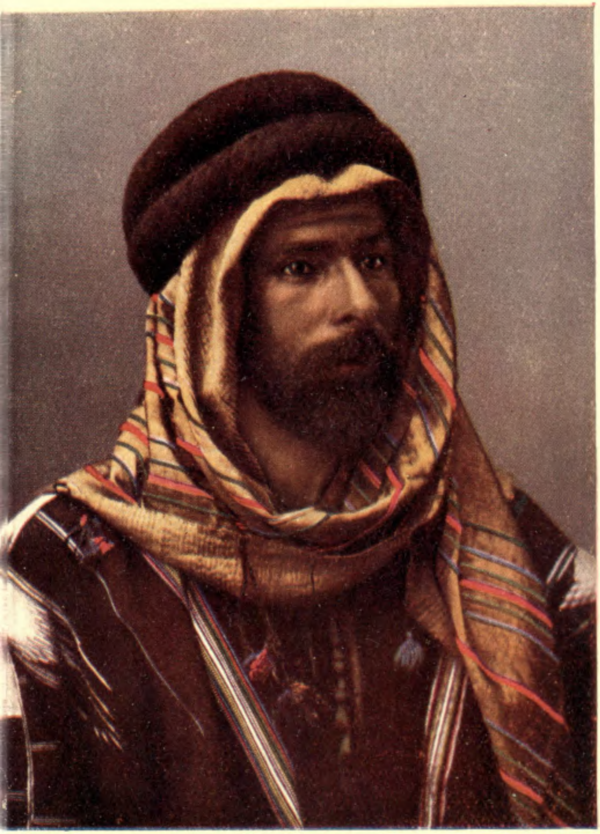
of it ranks with the most wonderful triumphs of genius in the world's literature. This is displayed less in the delineation of the physical effects of terror than in the power with which the poet conveys a sense of the vague and impalpable, and the awe inspired by the wholly-felt but dimly known. The revelation came stealthily to him, and fell on his ear in a whisper, with all the dread which gathers about the secret uttered in a tone which the listener alone can hear. Already his mind had been engaged in deep pondering, arising from visions he had seen in the entranced sleep of the seer. As he meditates, he is suddenly seized with a panic, which causes all his limbs to tremble. Then a breath moves across his face, deepening his horror of the uncanny visitant. The nameless thing stands still, and seeking to know the worst, he strains his eyes to make out the figure before him. But he can see nothing, except that some form is there; all is dim and intangible, making his heart quail with the dread of the unknown. Then, as he lies helpless in the grip of his fear, he is conscious of a voice, which just breaks the awful stillness, and teaches him the lesson he now impresses on Job.

**13.** Eliphaz is a seer who is privileged to see night visions. He does not mean that while ordinary men were wrapped in deep slumber he was receiving visions in a state of wakefulness. The night is the season when the deep sleep of trance falls upon the clairvoyant, when the senses are blunted to the external world, but the spirit is the more sensitive to the things which lie beyond the realm of sight. It is thus in the quiet evening when the tumult of the day dies down, or in the intenser stillness of the night, that the seer, no longer distracted by the cares and bustle of the world, finds the inward eye open to see its visions. Thus the author of the very interesting, and, for the psychological conditions of the prophetic state, important passage, Isa. xxi. 1–10, speaks of 'the twilight that I desired' (verse 4). Eliphaz was meditating on what he had seen in his trances, when the experience he proceeds to describe befell him. It was not of the same character as his visions, but came to him when he was fully awake (cf. Isa. l. 4).

**14.** First of all comes the terror, with no apparent cause; here the description has often been verified in similar experiences, the sudden sense of the presence being felt before it has made itself manifest to ear, eye, or touch.



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Arab Sheikh

Then a spirit passed before my face; 15
The hair of my flesh stood up.
It stood still, but I could not discern the appearance 16
thereof;
A form was before mine eyes:
*There was* silence, and I heard a voice, *saying*,
Shall mortal man be more just than God? 17
Shall a man be more pure than his Maker?
Behold, he putteth no trust in his servants; 18

---

**15. a spirit passed before.** This translation may be correct, and it is adopted by Ewald and Duhm. But more probably we should translate as in the margin, 'a breath passed over'; the cold wind which is said to be felt in such experiences. The speaker slips into the imperfect tense, here equivalent to our present, as the old horror masters him and he shudders once again with vivid realization, 'a breath passes over my face,' &c.

**16.** If we translate 'a breath' in verse 15, the subject of the verb is left unexpressed. 'It stood still' thus creates a far more powerful impression than if Eliphaz had named it. It is unnamed because it is unknown, and thus the vagueness, which characterizes the description, here also heightens the terror. The last words are usually translated as in the margin, 'I heard a still voice,' the two nouns 'silence and a voice' being taken as a hendiadys. The translation 'there was stillness and I heard a voice' yields a finer sense, the dead hush and then the voice. That the voice was faint and thin we know already from verse 12. So the spirits of the dead chirp and mutter, Isa. viii. 19. The revelation came to Elijah with a still small voice, which stood in striking contrast to the crash and roar of the elements, here the low voice is in contrast to the utter stillness that had preceded it.

**17.** After so awestruck an introduction we expect an original and impressive revelation. This we do not get according to the R.V. text. So trivial a commonplace as that man is not more righteous than God needed no vision to declare it; and it is quite irrelevant in this connexion. No one maintains the opposite; it is only at a later stage that Job impugns the righteousness of God. We should therefore translate as in the margin, 'be just before God,' 'be pure before his Maker.' The translation, adopted by Kautzsch, 'can man be right as against God?' would also suit better a later stage in the discussion.

**18.** The **servants** of God are, as the next line shows, the angels. The angelology of the O.T. and of Jewish theology,

And his angels he chargeth with folly:
19 How much more them that dwell in houses of clay,
Whose foundation is in the dust,
Which are crushed before the moth!
20 Betwixt morning and evening they are destroyed:
They perish for ever without any regarding it.
21 Is not their tent-cord plucked up within them?
They die, and that without wisdom.

---

largely also of the N.T., does not recognize the distinction between good and evil angels (see note on i. 6). We should therefore take this passage in its obvious sense, and not force it into harmony with later views.

**folly.** The word so translated (*tohŏlāh*) occurs only here, so that its meaning is uncertain. According to Dillmann it is connected with an Ethiopic verb meaning 'to err.' In that case the word will mean 'error.' It is not unlikely that we should correct the text slightly and read *tiphlāh*, the word translated 'foolishness' in i. 22.

**19.** Since the angels are spirit, they are more akin to God than men are, for the latter are material, dwelling in bodies made of clay, rooted in the earthy. As such, men are also exposed to physical sins, to which spiritual beings would not, it might seem, be tempted. Yet the narrative in Gen. vi. 1-4 shows that Hebrew thought regarded it as possible for the *elohim*, spirit though they were, to be tempted by sensual passion, and lead Yahweh to declare that this unhallowed mixture of spirit and flesh should not continue. The reason for man's impurity in God's sight is his material nature, the physical is also the morally frail. An instructive parallel is Ps. lxxviii. 39, 'And he remembered that they were but flesh; A wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.'

**foundation:** i. e. of the houses, carrying on the metaphor.

**before the moth:** the meaning may be sooner than the moth is crushed, but this is improbable. It would be better to translate 'like' as in the margin, and perhaps in iii. 24; cf. Ps. xxxix. 11. Fried. Delitzsch thinks that the word translated 'moth' is a distinct word, meaning a flimsy structure of some kind.

**20.** Their brief life does not span the period from sunrise to sunset, and when they die no one observes an event so trifling. The first words of the verse are more literally rendered in the margin 'from morning to evening'; cf. Isa. xxxviii. 12.

**21.** The margin translates, 'Is not their excellency which is in them removed?' But the text is better, death is compared to the

Call now; is there any that will answer thee? **5**
And to which of the holy ones wilt thou turn?
For vexation killeth the foolish man, 2

---

plucking up of a tent-cord and taking down of the tent. Here again cf. Isa. xxxviii. 12. Further, man is so constituted that as he lives so he dies without attaining wisdom.

v. **1.** The verse seems to mean that it would be useless for Job to appeal to the angels against God. It would be an exhibition of impotent wrath, that, as verse 2 proceeds to say, would lead to his destruction. It seems strange, however, that Eliphaz should suppose Job to contemplate such a course, accordingly Duhm, following Siegfried, strikes out the verse, connecting v. 2 closely with iv. 21. But this connexion is only superficially good. For iv. 21 speaks of the common lot of frail man; v. 2 ff., of the destruction of the fool through his own irritation. Besides, the verse is too striking for a glossator, and how should he have inserted it in a context apparently so inappropriate? When we look more closely into the context we discover points of connexion. Eliphaz has already explained that the angels are so imperfect that God puts no trust in them, and charges them with folly (iv. 18). The thought of the close connexion between God and the angels on one side, and man and the angels on the other, led not unnaturally to the thought that the angels might intercede for man, a thought that may be expressed by Elihu (xxxiii. 23), and is found in Enoch. It was, therefore, not wholly unnatural for Eliphaz to warn Job against being driven by his desperation to invoke the angels. This warning finds its completion in verse 8, so that the general thought would be, Do not appeal to the angels who cannot help you, and thus draw down the penalty of your exasperation, but commit your cause to the all-powerful omniscient God, who can save you out of your distress. The case is parallel with the exhortation given by Paul to the Colossians that they should not worship angels who are themselves far from perfect, and powerless to help, but the all-sufficient Saviour in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells. On the possible relation of verse 7 to this verse, see note on verses 6, 7.

**the holy ones.** This designation of the angels is often thought to suggest that they, pure beings as they are, would turn with abhorrence from one who thus appealed to them. But probably 'holy' has here no ethical significance; it would be strange if it had, after iv. 18. Budde's translation 'heavenly ones' brings out the meaning more correctly. They are supernatural beings, who live superior to the material limitations of earth. That is why Job might not unreasonably appeal to them.

**2.** Reason why Job should not appeal to the angels: it would

And jealousy slayeth the silly one.
3 I have seen the foolish taking root:
But suddenly I cursed his habitation.
4 His children are far from safety,
And they are crushed in the gate,
Neither is there any to deliver them.

---

be a manifestation of temper that would lead to his death. True, Job longed for death, and might be tempted to turn from God to the angels, feeling that in any case, whether it brought death or release from pain, his lot could not be worse. Eliphaz, however, looks forward to Job's restoration and long life, and therefore bids him not let his exasperation so master him that he flings his chances away.

**jealousy**: the margin 'indignation' suits the context much better.

**3.** It is generally agreed that the second half of the verse needs correction. In its present form its meaning is not clear. It may be, 'I foresaw and pronounced his doom,' but this does not suit 'suddenly'; why should he have uttered his prediction suddenly? This objection does not lie against the view that he saw the stroke of judgement fall, and then declared that it was God's curse which was being executed, since in that case the curse is uttered in consequence of a sudden catastrophe. But this is not the natural sense of the passage, which is rather, 'I saw him flourish, but I cursed his habitation, and it was blasted in consequence of my curse.' Here again 'suddenly' is not suitable, and in spite of the power believed to lie in a curse, it is not likely that the speaker means that he effected the ruin of the foolish. He is illustrating from his own experience the principle enunciated in verse 2; he is naturally therefore only an observer of, not an agent in, the destruction. We rather expect a mention of the actual fate that befell the foolish thus suddenly. Several emendations have been proposed. An easy one is to read, 'but suddenly his habitation became rotten.' Since 'rotten,' however, is not very appropriate to 'habitation,' we might possibly do better to correct the latter word also, with Cheyne, and read, 'but suddenly his branch became rotten,' thus securing a correspondence with 'taking root' in the previous line. Budde reads 'became empty.'

**4.** Fate of his orphans. Deprived of their once powerful protector, the children are exposed to many perils, are too weak to help letting themselves be crushed (this is the sense of the Hithpael) in the gate, where the administration of justice is at the mercy of the strong arm and the long purse.

Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, 5
And taketh it even out of the thorns,
And the snare gapeth for their substance.
For affliction cometh not forth of the dust, 6

---

**5.** For **Whose harvest** we might better read 'what they have reaped' (so many scholars with LXX). They cannot secure their grain against theft.

**even out of the thorns:** as usually explained the meaning is that they break through the thorn hedge into the field to plunder the corn. But this is not very probable; why should they trouble to do this in order to get into the field? Thomson (*The Land and the Book*, p. 348) suggests other explanations, either they 'leave nothing behind them, not even that which grew among thorns,' or the reference is to the custom of farmers to lay aside the grain after threshing in some private place near the floor, 'and cover it up with thorn-bushes to keep it from being carried away or eaten by animals. Robbers who found and seized this would literally take it from among thorns.' Several scholars think the original text is not preserved, but no satisfactory emendation has been proposed. Bickell and Duhm strike out the clause, which does not suit the scheme of four-lined stanzas.

**the snare gapeth for their substance.** This yields no very satisfactory sense. Budde retains it in his translation, and Davidson thinks it is safest, though he admits that it is 'rather vague and colourless.' Generally the view, mentioned in the margin as adopted by 'many ancient versions,' that instead of 'the snare gapeth' we should translate 'the thirsty swallow up,' is accepted. We thus get a parallel to 'the hungry eateth up' in the first line. But this is open to a double objection, the verb is singular, while the noun is plural, so that some correction is required, and the line 'the thirsty swallow their substance' would in any case be infelicitous, but doubly so when parallel to literal eating by the hungry in the first line. But instead of inferring from this that we had better put up with the unsatisfactory line 'the snare gapeth for their substance,' it is surely better to get a perfect parallelism by correcting 'substance' into something which satisfies the thirsty as the harvest satisfies the hungry, some form of drink, as that was some form of food. Either Duhm's 'and the thirsty draws from their well,' or Beer's 'and the thirsty drink their milk,' yields a good sense and parallelism with slight emendation. The latter is perhaps preferable.

**6, 7.** These verses are far from clear. They are often supposed to deny the spontaneous origin of human trouble; it does not

Neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;
7 But man is born unto trouble,
As the sparks fly upward.

---

spring like weeds from the ground, but arises out of the evil conduct of men. The connexion would seem to be, I have seen the unrighteous fall suddenly from prosperity to ruin, for trouble does not come without a cause. This is not a very good logical connexion; we should rather have expected, I have seen the ruin of the unrighteous, for sin does not fail to have its effect. Budde explains that Eliphaz argues back here from effect to cause, rather than, as we should expect, from cause to effect, because the effect, i.e. Job's affliction, constituted his starting-point. But, apart from the logical inversion, of which it is questionable whether Budde's explanation is satisfactory, it is noteworthy that the thought is so obscurely expressed. To say that trouble does not spring from the dust means that trouble does not arise without a cause is precarious, but it is still more so to read in the further thought that this cause is man's own sin. In iv. 19 we learn that the moral defect of men is due partly to the fact that like the angels they are creatures, partly to the fact that unlike them they dwell in bodies formed of dust. But Duhm is hypercritical when he argues that this implies, in contradiction to our verse, that trouble does spring out of the dust. The uncertainty of meaning is enhanced by the fact that verse 7 is capable of so many interpretations. The word translated 'is born' may be pointed in five different ways, but the main question is whether we should translate 'man is born to trouble' or 'man begets trouble.' The former view is that usually taken, but the latter is also possible; the meaning would then be that man has himself to thank for the trouble he has to suffer. The sense of the second line is even more uncertain. As the margin indicates, the word translated 'sparks' is more literally 'the sons of flame *or* of lightning.' If we adopt the usual view, that the phrase means 'sparks,' the meaning will be, just as surely as sparks fly upward. But it is not at all certain that it does mean 'sparks.' Cheyne suggested 'burning arrows' shot high in the air and ready to fall on the guilty. Some think the reference is to birds; Siegfried, indeed, corrects the text and reads 'the eagle race' (*nesher* for *resheph*). Fried. Delitzsch explains that they are men who are all fire and flame, blind zealots who fly on high and vanish without a trace. It is possible that Schlottmann and G. Hoffmann have best hit the meaning, they take 'the race of flame' to be angels (the Targum had similarly explained that they are demons). It is quite true that we cannot establish this sense by any parallels, though the angels are closely connected with the stars. It fits in

But as for me, I would seek unto God, 8
And unto God would I commit my cause :
Which doeth great things and unsearchable ; 9
Marvellous things without number :
Who giveth rain upon the earth, 10
And sendeth waters upon the fields :
So that he setteth up on high those that be low ; 11

---

well with the general context. In verse 1 Eliphaz has condemned recourse to the angels, here he gives the reason, they soar far above human trouble, and continues, in verse 8, I would in your case commit myself to God. This is not to be refuted by pointing out the prevalence of a belief in the intercession of angels, for Eliphaz may be directly controverting it. The suggestion might perhaps be hazarded that the text may at one time have expressed clearly the contrast which is now dimly present in 'from the dust' and 'soar on high.' Are we not following the wrong clue in explaining 'not from the dust' to mean 'without a cause'? The contrast suggested by 'not from the dust' is that trouble comes from on high (cf. Longfellow's 'these severe afflictions Not from the ground arise'). The 'race of flame' might in that case conceivably be regarded as the author of human trouble. Or possibly verse 6 may have originally said that trouble does spring from the dust, therefore (verse 7) man is doomed to it by the conditions of his earthly life, but the angels escape since they soar high above earth. It is not possible to feel any confidence as to the meaning, but the verses strike one as too powerful and original to favour Wellhausen's view, accepted by Beer, Siegfried, and Duhm, that they are an interpolation.

**8.** Now Eliphaz passes from this assertion of the folly of irritation and urges him to entrust his cause to God. The Hebrew expresses with much emphasis the contrast between what Job is doing and what the speaker would do in his place. He has so little sounded the depths of Job's trouble as to be unaware that Job felt his way to God cut off.

**9.** God's greatness and power should be the ground of Job's confidence in appealing to Him.

**11. So that he setteth up.** If this is closely connected with verse 10, the sense yielded by this translation or by the more obvious rendering of the A. V. 'to set up' is not at all satisfactory. We need not on that account strike out verse 10, with Duhm, as foreign to the argument and breaking the connexion between verses 8, 9 and verses 11, 12 ; for verse 11 may refer to the general idea of verses 9, 10. It is possible to translate 'setting up,'

And those which mourn are exalted to safety.
12 He frustrateth the devices of the crafty,
So that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.
13 He taketh the wise in their own craftiness:
And the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.
14 They meet with darkness in the day-time,
And grope at noonday as in the night.
15 But he saveth from the sword of their mouth,
Even the needy from the hand of the mighty.

co-ordinating the clause with what precedes, as a fresh example of God's working. The truth expressed is general, but there is also a special reference to Job's case.

**12.** A favourite idea of Hebrew wisdom that, while God exalts the lowly, He brings to nought the plans of the haughty.

**cannot perform their enterprise,** marg. 'can perform nothing of worth.' The word translated **enterprise** (*tushiyyāh*) belongs to the technical vocabulary of the Wisdom Literature, and is found with two exceptions (Isa. xxviii. 29; Mic. vi. 9) only in Job and Proverbs. A root *yashah* is generally assumed for it, but as it nowhere occurs, and its meaning is disputed, this gives us no clue to the sense of the derivative. Some make the idea of wisdom, rationality, prominent, but the context here and in vi. 13 favours the meaning success, something substantial and effectual. In both places the new Oxford Lexicon renders 'abiding success.'

**13.** The quotation from this verse in 1 Cor. iii. 19 is the only quotation from Job in the New Testament.

**14.** Cf. Deut. xxviii. 29. They are struck intellectually with darkness and grope as the men of Sodom or Elymas did literally when struck with physical darkness (Gen. xix. 11; Acts xiii. 11; cf. 2 Kings vi. 18-20).

**15.** It seems clear that the text is corrupt. The usual parallelism is wanting, and the words 'he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth' yield no satisfactory sense. They are explained 'from the sword, i.e. their mouth,' or 'from the sword which comes out of their mouth,' or 'from the sword, which is their mouth,' i. e. their instrument of devouring. Several point the consonants of the word translated 'from the sword' differently (*moḥŏrāb* for *mēḥereb*). Thus we should get the sense, 'But he saves the desolate from their mouth, and, from the hand of the mighty, the poor.' This is generally rejected now on the ground that this word 'desolate' is elsewhere used only of cities, never

So the poor hath hope, 16
And iniquity stoppeth her mouth.
Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth : 17
Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.
For he maketh sore, and bindeth up ; 18
He woundeth, and his hands make whole.
He shall deliver thee in six troubles ; 19

---

of persons. Some omit the second 'from,' 'he saves from the sword of their mouth.' The word translated 'the poor' comes in the Hebrew at the end of the second line, and we need a similar word in the first line to balance it. Budde strikes out 'from the sword' and inserts 'the orphan' after 'from their mouth,' so that the verse would run, 'he saves from their mouth the orphan, and, from the hand of the mighty, the poor.' Siegfried reads, 'he saves from the sword the needy, and, from the hand of the mighty, the poor.' Either of these is an improvement on the present text.

**16.** The second line occurs in a very similar form in Ps. cvii. 42. The wicked are dumb with confusion when they see the ignominious failure of their schemes, and the exaltation of the despised, whose ruin they had been contriving.

**17.** And now, in a beautiful and glowing peroration, Eliphaz depicts the happiness of him who is chastened by God, and paints a lovely picture of the blessedness awaiting Job, if he receives God's chastisement aright. Yet for all its sweet and soothing eloquence and promise of idyllic peace, the noble rhetoric rings hollow to Job's ear. For its fundamental assumption is that Job's suffering is punishment for sin, and his restoration conditional on meek submission to God's discipline. Thus the words, which were meant to be healing, make his wounds smart the more. For how could he believe such comforting assurances, when his experience taught him only too plainly how God could torture the blameless? The thought of the blessedness of the man whom God chastens is not unusual in the later Hebrew literature. A close parallel with the present verse is Prov. iii. 11, 12, which is quoted Heb. xii. 5, 6. Cf. Ps. xciv. 12, and the development given to the thought in the speeches of Elihu.

**18.** Cf. Hos. vi. 1, Deut. xxxii. 39. God's drastic surgery is for the sufferer's higher good, and the hand that uses the knife without flinching is also the gentle hand that tenderly binds up the wound.

**19.** The description that follows reminds one rather strikingly

Yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.
20 In famine he shall redeem thee from death;
And in war from the power of the sword.
21 Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue;
Neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.
22 At destruction and dearth thou shalt laugh;
Neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.
23 For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field;
And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.

---

of the exquisite ninety-first Psalm. The thrilling language is that of a truly pious man who feels deeply the truths he is expounding, and would fain uplift Job with the confidence that inspires him as he speaks. Once more God's hedge will be about him so that no evil can touch him.

**21.** We might translate, 'when the tongue lasheth.' The sense is good, though, as Duhm points out, we should rather in this context have expected a noun meaning 'pestilence.' Possibly the text originally read this. We should then have the 'four sore judgements,' enumerated by Ezekiel: 'the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beasts, and the pestilence' (Ezek. xiv. 21, cf. verses 13–19; v. 17). Pestilence and destruction also occur in Ps. xci. 6. For 'destruction' in this verse Hoffmann reads 'a demon' (*shēd* for *shōd*). This strikes a modern reader as rather grotesque, but to the ancients it was more serious. The 'terror by night' was more real to them, and even to day Lilith has not ceased to be a peril dreaded by many Jews. There is no need to alter the pointing, though if it is retained the repetition of 'destruction' in verse 22 is curious.

**22. Neither shalt thou be afraid:** the translation misses a point here. The negative is not the same as that used in verse 21. That simply expressed the fact 'thou shalt not fear.' This imports into the thought the speaker's point of view, 'thou needest not fear.'

**23.** There runs through much of the Old Testament a deep sense of the sympathy between man and nature, which often finds expression in the prophetic descriptions of the happy future. Here the thought is poetically expressed that he need not fear famine (verse 22), for the stones will keep out of his field. It can surely hardly be meant that the very stones will bring forth corn and fruit, we might in that case compare Matt. iii. 9, iv. 3. Paul also thinks of the lot of Nature as inextricably bound up with that

And thou shalt know that thy tent is in peace; 24
And thou shalt visit thy fold, and shalt miss nothing.
Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, 25
And thine offspring as the grass of the earth.
Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, 26
Like as a shock of corn cometh in in its season.
Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; 27
Hear it, and know thou it for thy good.

Then Job answered and said, 6

---

of man, and catches the undertone of pain with which she groans, waiting for that redemption which can come only with man's complete adoption (Rom. viii. 19–22). Cf. also, for the second line, Isa. xi. 6–9.

**24.** For **fold** the marg. gives 'habitation,' for **shalt miss nothing,** it gives 'shalt not err.' The text is in both cases preferable.

**25.** From the conventional list of earthly blessings a numerous posterity could not be absent, so Eliphaz, carried away by his own eloquence, includes it here, forgetting that Job's children had all been destroyed. It is not likely that the poet means him to predict consciously what we read in xlii. 13, though it would be quite in his manner to put an unconscious prediction in the mouth of one of the friends. He rather suggests that Eliphaz's consolation is too conventional.

**26. a full age:** the word so translated occurs only here and in xxx. 2. It probably means 'a ripe old age.' Eliphaz can hold out no hope beyond the grave, but promises all that is possible, a long life and death without the failure of powers that usually attends old age. In the Epilogue we are told that after his restoration Job lived twice the threescore years and ten that are assigned in Ps. xc. 10 as the normal limit of man's whole life.

**27.** Looking back, not simply on his peroration but on his whole speech, Eliphaz affirms that it embodies the investigations into truth of himself and his friends, and bids Job lay it to heart.

**Hear it:** we should probably read with the LXX, 'we have heard it,' the Hebrew text being strange. No change in the consonants is involved.

vi. 1–13. Job begins his reply to Eliphaz with the wish that his pain might be balanced against his irritation, for then his desperate words would be abundantly justified. It is God who has drunk his strength with poisoned arrows, God's terrors that are arrayed against him. The animals do not complain without reason, no

2 Oh that my vexation were but weighed,
And my calamity laid in the balances together!
3 For now it would be heavier than the sand of the seas:
Therefore have my words been rash.

---

more does he. He loathes his afflictions. Oh that God would slay him outright! he cannot endure his sufferings.

vi. 14–30. In his despair he had looked to his friends for kindness, but had been bitterly disappointed. They were like streams, which offered abundant supply of water in the winter when they were not needed, but in the summer betrayed the caravans, which trusted in them to be saved from death. Job had not asked a gift or protection from them. Their arguments are worthless; they take too seriously the wild words of despair; they are devoid of pity. Let them receive the solemn assurance of his innocence.

vii. 1–21. How hard is man's lot! Job's life is one of misery, swiftly speeding him in wretchedness to irretrievable death. So he will speak plainly out of his soul's bitterness: Why should God watch him as if he were dangerous, and plague him with such torments? Is man of such moment that God must needs spy on all his actions? can Job's sin hurt God? why does not God freely forgive him, before forgiveness is too late?

The bitter complaint of the third chapter had elicited reproof rather than sympathy. Eliphaz had condemned Job's impatience, ignoring his provocation, and had hinted that his trouble was occasioned by his sin. Such treatment shocked and angered the sufferer; it drove him into open criticism of God and scornful denunciation of his friends, both mingled with touching and pitiful appeal. Conscious of his own integrity he could not understand how his trusted friends could question it. His full misery comes home to him in the distorted reflection of himself that he sees in the minds of his friends, and God's cruelty seems all the more glaring that it has wounded him in his honour. Hence while in the complaint he only obscurely referred to God as the author of his trouble, he now attacks God without disguise.

vi. 2. Job begins with a reference to the criticism of his impatience (v. 2; cf. iv. 5). He wishes that it could be weighed against his pain; it would not then appear excessive.

**together:** i.e. with my impatience, though the meaning might be 'in its totality,' i.e. all my calamity.

**3.** Cf. Prov. xxvii. 3: 'A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; But a fool's vexation is heavier than them both.'

**rash,** or 'wild'; cf. verse 26. The admission relates rather to the form of the language than to its substance. His fevered

For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, 4
The poison whereof my spirit drinketh up:
The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.
Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? 5
Or loweth the ox over his fodder?
Can that which hath no savour be eaten without salt? 6
Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?

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utterances are due to the poison with which the Almighty has tipped His arrows (verse 4).

**4.** At last Job names God as the author of his troubles. It is because the pains he suffers are sent by the hand of the Almighty that they terrify and paralyse him. His spirit has drunk in the poison, which has sapped his inner strength. Changing the metaphor, he represents the terrors of God as assailing him like a hostile army. But the text may be wrong. Several scholars, including Dillmann, Budde, and Duhm, transpose two consonants, and read, 'the terrors of God do trouble me.' Duhm attaches to this verse the first line of verse 7, correcting 'to touch *them*,' with the LXX, into 'to be quiet,' the alteration required in the Hebrew being quite slight. See further on verse 7.

**5.** If the wild ass or ox have their desires satisfied, they do not complain; neither would Job complain, were there no adequate cause. His friends should infer from his complaints the depth of his suffering. So Amos argues that phenomena must have an adequate cause, and that the very fact of his appearance as a prophet should convince his hearers that Yahweh is about to bring some judgement to pass (Amos iii. 3-8).

**fodder:** the word means 'mixed fodder,' which was specially liked by the cattle.

**6.** We may translate the first line as in R. V., or we may translate, 'Can that be eaten which is tasteless and without salt?' The meaning of the second line is disputed. The phrase translated 'the white of an egg' means literally the slime about the yolk. The objection that the Jews learnt poultry-keeping from the Persians is not conclusive against this, though the phrase itself is curious. Some think a plant is intended, and that we should translate 'the juice of purslain' (see marg.) or 'purslain broth.' Klostermann says that the LXX read 'in dream words,' and he adopts this, taking the meaning to be that the friends should not interpret Job's fevered words as if they expressed his fundamental convictions. The change in the Hebrew is trifling, and Kamphausen, who judges Klostermann's emendations very unfavourably as a rule, thinks that this one deserves consideration.

7 My soul refuseth to touch *them*;
They are as loathsome meat to me.
8 Oh that I might have my request;
And that God would grant *me* the thing that I long for!
9 Even that it would please God to crush me;
That he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!
10 Then should I yet have comfort;
Yea, I would exult in pain that spareth not:
For I have not denied the words of the Holy One.

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**7.** The margin translates the verse, 'What things my soul refused to touch, these are as my loathsome meat.' If the Hebrew text is correct, this does not seem to be an improvement. The second line is, however, very strange, literally it means 'they are as the sickness of my food,' i. e. apparently, they are like diseased food to me, the reference being to his sufferings, cf. iii. 24. Bickell strikes out the whole verse. Duhm, however, makes a very clever suggestion. As already mentioned, he transfers the first line to the end of verse 4, getting the couplet, 'The terrors of God do trouble me, my soul refuses to be quiet.' The second line then has no parallel, and he thinks it originated out of an Aramaic gloss on the last words of verse 6, meaning 'that is now called white of egg.' Ley alters a single consonant and obtains the sense, 'they make me loathe my food.'

**8, 9.** As Job dwells on the thought that his sufferings only too fully justify his complaint, the sense of all his long pain breaks on him with such overwhelming power that he vehemently cries for God to smite him so that He should not need to strike again. His deepest longing (as in ch. iii) is that God would put him out of his misery. Hitherto God has struck him with a fettered hand, so to speak; now he would have God release His hand and strike with full force, so that he should not linger in torture but be slain outright.

**10.** Job's comfort is death, and could he but be assured of its coming, he would not let the most ruthless pain quell his exultation at the prospect. If in the third line we translated 'that,' as in the margin, instead of 'for,' the second line would be parenthetical, and the meaning of the main sentence would be that Job's comfort would consist in the consciousness that he had not disowned the words of the Holy One. But this thought is alien to the context; it is therefore better to translate 'for.' The sense is in that case that he exults in the prospect of death, because he has not 'denied the words of the Holy One.' Inas-

What is my strength, that I should wait? 11
And what is mine end, that I should be patient?
Is my strength the strength of stones? 12
Or is my flesh of brass?
Is it not that I have no help in me, 13
And that effectual working is driven quite from me?
To him that is ready to faint kindness *should be shewed* 14
from his friend;

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much, however, as this has little meaning, except on the assumption of retribution after death, to which Job does not look forward, since in Sheol good and bad were all in the same case, we should perhaps strike out the third line with Siegfried, Beer, and Duhm. Job's obedience to the commands of God was just what made his problem so perplexing, and death in conscious innocence was nevertheless death with his character uncleared, no cause for exultation. If the third line is omitted 'comfort' refers to death, and exultation to the prospect of it.

The margin offers several alternative translations, which must be enumerated, though in each case the text is to be preferred. For 'Yea, I would exult' it reads 'though I shrink back' or 'harden myself'; for 'that spareth not' it reads 'though he spare not'; and for 'denied' it reads 'concealed.'

**11, 12.** Were he strong like stones or brass he might bear pain with fortitude and patience, but he is so frail that he cannot repress his cry under torture. If his suffering led to renewed health he might endure it in patience, but since it can lead only to death, how can he be other than impatient when death comes so tardily to release him?

**be patient:** this is the sense of the Hebrew, which is literally 'prolong my soul'; the translation in A. V., 'prolong my life,' would require in Hebrew 'prolong my days.'

**13.** The Hebrew for **Is it not** is difficult; if the text is right, the meaning is that his strength is exhausted. Duhm divides the consonants differently and gets the sense, Behold, my help within me is nothing, i. e. my inward strength is nothing. Klostermann transposes two consonants and changes the pronominal suffix from first to third person, and obtains the sense 'should I believe my help is in him, seeing that all effectual working is driven from me?'

**effectual working:** see note on v. 12.

**14.** The verse is difficult, the general sense is probably that given by the R. V., though it would be better to substitute

Even to him that forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.
15 My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook,
As the channel of brooks that pass away;
16 Which are black by reason of the ice,
*And* wherein the snow hideth itself:
17 What time they wax warm, they vanish:
When it is hot, they are consumed out of their place.
18 The caravans *that travel* by the way of them turn aside;

---

'despairing' for 'ready to faint.' The verse expresses Job's keen disappointment with his friends; he knew himself to be slipping from true religion, and hoped that his friends would by their sympathy have strengthened his failing piety. The translation in the margin 'Else might he forsake' would require different Hebrew. The alternative 'but he forsaketh' gives no satisfactory sense. Some correct the text and read, 'He that withholdeth kindness from his neighbour forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.' Duhm reads, 'He who withholdeth kindness from the despairing forsaketh the fear of the Almighty,' and thinks it was originally a note on the two following verses, since it is too general and cold for Job's speech.

**15.** In a beautiful metaphor, somewhat elaborately worked out, Job describes how bitterly his friends have disappointed him. Cf. Jer. xv. 18, 'Wilt thou indeed be unto me as a deceitful *brook*, as waters that fail?' See Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 488. By 'brethren' he means the friends, not, as Fried. Delitzsch thinks, his actual brothers.

**pass away:** this is more fully developed in verses 17 ff. But we may also translate 'overflow,' and this yields a finer sense, and is further supported by the connexion with verse 16. The brooks overflow in winter time when they are not needed, but fail in the heat of summer; so Job's friends are full of kindness when none is needed, but when trouble comes they fail the sufferer.

**16.** When the thaw comes the streams rush down their channels, black with broken ice and melting snow.

**17. wax warm:** the word occurs only here, and its sense is doubtful. The margin translates 'shrink,' but the text is more probably correct. When they are scorched by the heat of summer they vanish.

**caravans.** This word also means **paths**, and if that sense is adopted here, we should translate as in the margin, 'the paths of their way are turned aside.' The meaning of the verse in that case is that the streams turn aside from their course and vanish in

They go up into the waste, and perish.
The caravans of Tema looked, 19
The companies of Sheba waited for them.
They were ashamed because they had hoped; 20
They came thither, and were confounded.
For now ye are nothing; 21
Ye see a terror, and are afraid.
Did I say, Give unto me? 22
Or, Offer a present for me of your substance?
Or, Deliver me from the adversary's hand? 23

---

the desert. But this is very unlikely. The same word is used in the next verse in the sense of 'caravans,' it is therefore improbable that it should mean anything else here. The streams vanish because of the heat, not because they leave their channels and meander to extinction in the sand, though it is true enough that streams do disappear in this way. Accordingly the verse means that when the caravans strike the channel, where they expected water, and find it dry, they turn aside to seek for water and perish miserably of thirst. Naturally they turn aside only because it is their last desperate chance; they will die if they stay where they are, and the next stream is too far for them to reach.

**19.** **Tema** is a North Arabian tribe of Ishmaelite origin. For **Sheba** see note on i. 15. Their caravans 'looked' for water, 'waited for them,' i. e. for the streams.

**20.** **ashamed,** as often, disappointed.

**21.** There is a variation in the MSS. between *lō'* 'not' and *lō* 'to it.' The former is translated in the R. V. text, but the sense 'nothing' can hardly be defended. The margin reads the latter, but the translation 'are *like* thereto' forces a meaning out of the Hebrew, and the thought would have been otherwise expressed. It is simplest to read *lī* 'to me' and to change 'for' into 'so' (reading *kēn* for *ki*), 'so have ye been to me.' Duhm follows Bickell in striking out the verse. He argues that while the friends were untrue they were not afraid. Still, Job may have seen in their attitude a proof of servility to God, whom they regarded as the author of his calamities.

**22.** Had he presumed on their friendship to ask a gift that would cost them anything, he would not have been surprised at their treatment, such a test he hints bitterly friendship could hardly be expected to stand.

**23.** Job had not asked them to spend any of their substance to

Or, Redeem me from the hand of the oppressors?
24 Teach me, and I will hold my peace:
And cause me to understand wherein I have erred.
25 How forcible are words of uprightness!
But what doth your arguing reprove?
26 Do ye imagine to reprove words?
Seeing that the speeches of one that is desperate are as wind.
27 Yea, ye would cast *lots* upon the fatherless,
And make merchandise of your friend.

---

redeem him from bandits by paying his ransom. Is it not possible that verse 27, which sounds extravagant, and is not closely connected with its context, may have originally stood after verse 23? Then the exaggeration would be natural. Did I ask you to ransom me from captivity? ransom me! you would much sooner sell me into it.

**24, 25.** Job is quite willing to be taught, and made to see his faults, but he cannot feel that Eliphaz has said anything to the purpose.

**forcible:** this translation may be right, but is conjectural. The radical sense of the word is sharpness, and this rather suggests the rendering, 'how irritating are words of uprightness,' a brilliant touch of nature as all will feel who have suffered from the conscientious ministrations of a 'candid friend.' If this is the meaning we must, of course, substitute 'and' for 'but' in the second line. A very similar word would give the sense 'how sweet,' and possibly the word in the text may simply be a harder form, and bear this meaning. Several adopt this view.

**your arguing.** The Hebrew is more scornful, 'reproving from you.'

**26.** Job seems to mean that his friends have made too much of his words; they ought rather to have penetrated behind the expressions that have outraged them to the feelings that prompted, and taken into account the circumstances that excused them. They ought to understand that the words of the desperate go into the wind (marg. 'for the wind'); they are too wild to warrant such censure as his words have received. Job is not fundamentally irreligious, as he would have been if he had spoken deliberately and in cold blood. The second line might mean that they treated his words as mere wind.

**27.** This is not very suitable in its context, and the charge is itself rather strange. It has been suggested in the note on verse

Now therefore be pleased to look upon me; 28
For surely I shall not lie to your face.
Return, I pray you, let there be no injustice; 29
Yea, return again, my cause is righteous.
Is there injustice on my tongue? 30
Cannot my taste discern mischievous things?
Is there not a warfare to man upon earth? 7
And are not his days like the days of an hireling?

---

23 that it would be more natural if it followed that verse. The word for 'lots' is not expressed; Bickell, followed by Duhm, reads 'fall' instead of 'cast' (literally 'cause to fall'), and for 'fatherless' he reads 'blameless.' 'Ye fall upon the blameless.' The second line has then to be read or at least explained otherwise than it is in R. V.

**28.** He entreats his friends to look him straight in the face, since he would certainly not be able to meet their glance with a lie on his lips. The margin translates 'and it will be evident unto you if I lie.' The text is better.

**29.** Some think that, stung by Job's invectives, the friends were leaving him, and that he begs them to return. But the meaning may be, turn from your misjudgement. This suits better the concluding portions of the two lines. He pleads that they would abandon their unjust treatment of him, and urges that his cause is just, for such seems to be the meaning of the Hebrew 'my righteousness is in it.'

**30.** The first line does not mean, is there wrong in my speech? but has my tongue lost the true taste of things, cannot it discriminate between good and bad? The second line has probably the same meaning.

vii. **1.** It is very striking with what skill the poet relates the general to the special problem in Job's mind. Hitherto he has been absorbed in the sense of his own misery, but now there dawns the consciousness that his own case is not singular. With new insight he looks at the broad field of human life, and reads its wretchedness through his own. Yet he barely glances at it, he is still so self-centred that he immediately returns to his own lot, the most poignant example of man's cruel destiny.

**warfare.** The word means either 'hard service,' military or otherwise, or, as the margin translates, 'time of service.' The word probably includes here both senses, the hard drudgery, the wounds and exposure of a soldier's life, and the impossibility of release till the full time, for which he has been engaged, has

2 As a servant that earnestly desireth the shadow,
And as an hireling that looketh for his wages:
3 So am I made to possess months of vanity,
And wearisome nights are appointed to me.
4 When I lie down, I say,
When shall I arise? but the night is long;
And I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.

---

expired. Both thoughts are also present in the reference to the 'hireling,' who is probably a hired labourer, not a mercenary soldier.

**2, 3.** Job now returns to his own case. The verse is completed in verse 3, and is not the completion of verse 1. As the slave bearing the burden and heat of the day pants for the shades of evening, when the heat dies into the coolness and rest soothes his aching limbs, or as the hired labourer looks forward to the wages that mark the end of his toil for the day (cf. Matt. xx. 8), and to both the evening seems so long in coming, so Job, panting for the grave, feels bitterly how wearisome are the months whose dreary length he must traverse ere he attains his release.

**earnestly desireth.** The word means 'to pant for,' and it would have been better so translated.

**wearisome nights:** at first sight a curious parallel to **months,** but the point in 'months' is the duration, in 'nights' the intensity, of his suffering. Out of the months he selects the nights as the extreme example, just as Paul couples Scythians with Barbarians (Col. iii. 11). He thus effects the transition to verse 4.

**4.** Job's 'evening' is death, meanwhile, unlike the labourer, he has no rest day or night. As he lies down at night his thought is 'would God it were morning' (Deut. xxviii. 67). But the interminable night lies between him and the day, and is spent in unceasing tossing, his sleeplessness interrupted, as we learn from verse 14, only by terrifying dreams. The point of the reference to the night is not that the pains are more acute then than in the day-time. The full meaning can be understood only by those who have suffered through a night from violent pain; time literally seems to stand still. The translation in the margin 'When shall I arise and the night be gone?' obscures the full meaning. The poet must have suffered so himself, and known with how much greater slowness time seems to move through a night than through a day of pain.

My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; 5
My skin closeth up and breaketh out afresh.
My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, 6
And are spent without hope.
Oh remember that my life is wind: 7
Mine eye shall no more see good.
The eye of him that seeth me shall behold me no more: 8

---

**5.** His sores breed worms, form a hard crust, and then break and run. In the second line the margin gives 'is broken and become loathsome,' but the text is better.

**6.** This is the most usual translation, but Elzas and Marshall have revived an older view that there is no reference to a shuttle that moves swiftly, but rather to the yarn or web which is so flimsy that the threads snap easily. In that case the word translated 'hope' must mean 'thread' as in Josh. ii. 18. Marshall renders the second line, 'They come to an end for lack of thread.' Elzas quotes Shaw as saying with reference to the women in his time, 'they do not use the shuttle, but conduct every thread of the woof with their fingers.' Cheyne corrects the text and reads 'my days are swifter than a crane,' and similarly in the parallel passage ix. 25, 26 he introduces birds instead of 'post' and 'swift ships' to correspond with eagle. But it is no gain to secure uniformity by eliminating the variety of metaphor. If the translation in the text be retained, 'without hope' means without hope of recovery; there is no reference to a happy future after death. There is no radical inconsistency in the complaint that life passes swiftly and the complaint that it drags on interminably. It is simply a change in point of view. A swift death is preferable to life in agony, but if life could be passed without constant pain, its brevity is an evil, since none would willingly exchange its warm glow and thrilling interest for the cold and colourless monotony of Sheol.

**7, 8** are addressed to God, not to Eliphaz; the plural is generally used when Job is addressing the friends, since one speaks for all. The pathos of this pitiful appeal to God, just before the bitter reproaches he is about to fling at Him, is very fine and moving. It is like an echo of the old familiar relations between them. Verse 8 is omitted in the original LXX, and therefore by Bickell. It is also regarded with suspicion by Dillmann, Budde, and Beer, while Duhm thinks there is no reason for rejecting it. There is some repetition in it, but the most serious objection is that it anticipates, and thus weakens the force of the very beautiful and touching verse with which the speech closes.

**remember:** so in x. 9. For life as wind cf. Ps. lxxviii. 39.

Thine eyes shall be upon me, but I shall not be.
9 As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away,
So he that goeth down to Sheol shall come up no more.
10 He shall return no more to his house,
Neither shall his place know him any more.
11 Therefore I will not refrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.
12 Am I a sea, or a sea-monster,

---

**upon me**: not 'against me.' God will seek as of old to look on him in love, but he will have passed to Sheol, in which God's loving-kindness is not displayed, and whose inhabitants cannot praise Him (Ps. lxxxviii. 10–12, vi. 5; Isa. xxxviii. 18).

**9, 10.** Job here emphatically denies the possibility of a return to earth after death. It is important to observe his attitude to this question, and how subtly the poet by the very energy of Job's denial shows the fascination the thought had for him, and suggests to the reader a recoil from his hopeless outlook (cf. x. 21, 22, xiv. 7–22, xvi. 22). The Babylonians called the underworld 'the land of no return.' As an illustration of the thought Lucretius, Book III, ll. 907–9, may be compared. Mr. Mallock paraphrases the lines thus:

> 'Never shalt thou behold thy dear ones more,
> Never thy wife await thee at the door,
> Never again thy little climbing boy
> A father's kindness in thine eyes explore.'
>
> *Lucretius On Life and Death*, p. 26.

**11.** Stirred by this sad picture of his troubles Job will no longer restrain himself. In his former speech, while his complaining is very bitter, he says but little against God, and that little indirectly. But now, with the utmost directness, he charges God with being his tormentor, in language of incisive bitterness, not untouched with scorn. He has to die soon and in agony, but he will at least tell God plainly what he thinks of Him, while the cherished opportunity still remains to him. He comes perilously near to fulfilling the Satan's prediction that he would curse God to His face. He hopes nothing from Him, soon he will have no more to fear from Him; he will have the relief of utter frankness, bursting the restraint he had so long placed on his speech.

**12.** In savage irony Job asks if he is so dangerous that God must keep a strict watch over him. Is he the turbulent sea,

That thou settest a watch over me?
When I say, My bed shall comfort me, 13
My couch shall ease my complaint;
Then thou scarest me with dreams, 14
And terrifiest me through visions:
So that my soul chooseth strangling, 15
And death rather than *these* my bones.
I loathe *my life*; I would not live alway: 16

---

fretting against the limits imposed on it by God, lest it should flood the earth or smite heaven with its angry waves? Is he the 'sea monster,' the dragon Tiamat, subdued by the Creator in the hoary past, but still kept in close confinement, lest once more it challenged with Him the rule of the universe? A frail, puny, mortal, already death-stricken, how could he be such a menace to God that He must watch him so narrowly?

**13–15.** When he seeks rest, hoping that his complainings may cease for a little, then God sends him a sleep that is worse than waking. Avicenna says: 'During sleep frequent atrabilious dreams appear. Breathing becomes so difficult that asthma sets in, and the highest degree of hoarseness is reached. It is often necessary to open the jugular vein, if the hoarseness and the dread of suffocation increases.' Lacking our modern conception of secondary causes, Job sees in these sufferings not the natural accompaniment of his disease, but direct acts of God.

**15.** So great is his agony that he wishes he might be suffocated outright. There is no reference in the verse to any contemplation of suicide, and though we might translate the second line 'death from my bones,' this cannot be explained to mean death by my own hands. If the Hebrew text is right we must translate as in R. V., and explain, I choose death in preference to being the skeleton I am. This interpretation, however, is rather forced, and it would be better, with several scholars, to change one consonant and read 'death rather than my pains.' Some also connect the first word of verse 16 (translated 'I loathe *my life*') with this verse, translating 'I despise death in comparison with my pains.' It is true that it does not make very good sense in verse 16, but it is questionable whether the language will permit it to be transferred to verse 15.

**16. I loathe** *my life.* The rendering 'I loathe' is to be preferred to the margin 'I waste away,' and the object of loathing is probably correctly defined as 'my life,' though standing by itself the expression is rather strange. Similarly, 'I would not live alway'

Let me alone; for my days are vanity.
17 What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him,
And that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him,
18 And that thou shouldest visit him every morning,
And try him every moment?
19 How long wilt thou not look away from me,
Nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?

---

is clearly better than the margin 'I shall not live alway,' as that was too obvious.

**Let me alone:** Job calls 'Hands off!' to God, a bold command.

**vanity:** marg. 'as a breath,' cf. verse 7.

**17.** In this and the following verse we have a bitter parody of Ps. viii. 5. The Psalmist, impressed with the wonders of the starry heavens, asks what is man that God should be so mindful of him and place him in a position of such high authority. Job asks, not why God should lavish on a creature so insignificant such honour and thoughtful care, but why he should be subjected to attention so alert and suspicious, as if he could really be of any importance. Job's morbid imagination distorts the unsleeping care of God into a maddening espionage. Disdain of His creatures would have been more befitting than such spiteful vigilance. How petty His character must be, since He descends to torture one so frail, and harry him with persecution so untiring. Had he known the truth he might have argued, 'How loving is the God who cares so minutely for man, and how great man must be, since he is worthy of God's unceasing regard.'

**18. visit him:** Cheyne needlessly emends the text, and reads 'prove him.' This, it is true, gives a closer parallel to the second line, and if the parody on Ps. viii. 5 disappeared with this word, would deserve more consideration. But the opening words of verse 17, and the general drift of the two verses, would, apart from this word, suggest Ps. viii. 5, and if it was in the poet's mind we should expect him to use 'visit.' If 'prove' was the original text, it might just as well be argued that the present text was due to an intentional conformation to the Psalm as that it was due to accident. But, if so, the poet is surely more likely than an editor to have seen this, and to have written 'visit' himself. Duhm thinks that Ps. viii is later than Job, in which case there is, of course, no parody.

**19.** Job feels that God has so beset him behind and before that he cannot escape from Him. To other souls than his the sense that they can never be free from God's observation, or live their

If I have sinned, what do I unto thee, O thou watcher of 20
men?
Why hast thou set me as a mark for thee,
So that I am a burden to myself?
And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and 21
take away mine iniquity?
For now shall I lie down in the dust;
And thou shalt seek me diligently, but I shall not be.

---

own life away from Him, has proved very oppressive. The reader will remember how prisoners have been exposed to incessant observation till the consciousness of it has driven them mad. This illustrates Job's case, his conviction of God's malevolence has sharpened his sensitiveness to His watchfulness. Cf. xiv. 6, Ps. xxxix. 13 (R.V. marg.). The expression in the second line is common in Arabic; one would be glad to think the poet wrote something different, but that is no justification for altering the text.

**20.** Job does not admit that he has sinned, but he urges that, if he had done so, his sin could not hurt God, who was far beyond reach of any shafts that men might shoot at Him. We may contrast 'Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned.' In the phrase 'watcher of men' Job reiterates the thought that God is a spy on his every movement. The margin 'preserver' gives the wrong sense.

**a mark:** not a target, though elsewhere Job applies this metaphor to himself (vi. 4, xvi. 12, cf. Lam. iii. 12, 13), but something against which one strikes. Job is, so to speak, always in God's way, wherever he may be; however anxiously he seeks to avoid contact with Him, God is always striking against him.

**a burden to myself:** so the present Hebrew text. But Jewish tradition says that the original reading was 'a burden on Thee,' and that this is one of the eighteen corrections of the scribes. Many scholars (though not Dillmann and Budde) accept 'on Thee' as original. Since we can more easily explain why 'on Thee' should be altered to 'on me,' this alteration being dictated by reverence, than why the Jewish tradition should have arisen if 'on me' was original, the tradition is probably correct. The thought is one of amazing boldness, that Job is a burden on the Almighty! but not too bold for the poet.

**21.** If he is a sinner, why should not God forgive him? Has God no magnanimity, that thus He treasures up Job's sins, till he has paid Him the uttermost farthing of penalty? Why not forgive before forgiveness is too late? For soon—thus with matchless

8 Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
2 How long wilt thou speak these things?
And *how long* shall the words of thy mouth be *like* a mighty wind?
3 Doth God pervert judgement?
Or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

---

pathos Job brings his speech to an end—he will die; but God will not remain in His present mood; He will think on His devoted servant once more in love, filled with remorse for His fit of anger, He will long to renew the old communion. But His vain regrets will come too late, Job will be gone beyond recall. It is strange how wonderfully the poet depicts the rising of this double conception of God in Job's mind. God as he feels Him to be in the present has not driven out God as he knew Him to be in the past. This thought of God's higher and lower self is prominent in some of Job's subsequent utterances.

viii. 1–7. Bildad rebukes Job's stormy, empty utterance. Impossible that the Almighty should be unjust! If Job's children have perished through their sin, yet if Job is righteous and will appeal to God, He will restore him to greater prosperity than before.

viii. 8–19. Let Job inquire of the ancients, who really knew, and were not ignorant as men now are, and they will teach him how short-lived is the prosperity of the wicked, and how certain is his doom.

viii. 20–22. God will not cast away the perfect or uphold the wicked. Job shall be restored and his enemies come to nought.

The theme of Bildad's speech is that God cannot do wrong, He rewards the good and the evil according to their works. It is Job's denial of this that has shocked him most deeply; he passes by his accusations of faithlessness and his complaints of his suffering that he may bring Job to a truer judgement of God. His tone is milder than that of Eliphaz, and much milder than that of Zophar. Job does not answer him with scorn or reproaches in his reply to this speech. Too modest to venture anything on his own authority, and with no awe-inspiring revelations to relate, Bildad rests on the maxims of the ancients.

viii. **2. a mighty wind.** The emphasis lies on the stormy character of Job's speech, uprooting cherished beliefs; there may be a further suggestion, that it was mere windy empty rhetoric.

**3.** The stress is placed in the Hebrew on **God** and **the Almighty**. How incredible that God should be unrighteous!

If thy children have sinned against him, 4
And he have delivered them into the hand of their
transgression:
If thou wouldest seek diligently unto God, 5
And make thy supplication to the Almighty;
If thou wert pure and upright; 6
Surely now he would awake for thee,
And make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.
And though thy beginning was small, 7
Yet thy latter end should greatly increase.
For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, 8
And apply thyself to that which their fathers have searched
out:

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Bildad cannot think together the notions God and injustice; they are mutually exclusive. And they are so, if God be truly defined. But the friends were in danger of identifying omnipotence with righteousness. It is Job's merit that he disentangles the two qualities.

**4, 5.** Usually verse 4 is taken as complete in itself, as in the margin, 'If thy children sinned against him, he delivered them into the hand of their transgression.' This is probably better than the translation in the text. The reference to the death of Job's children favours the view that the poet wrote the Prologue, or at least incorporated it in his book. Job has not died by the swift summary vengeance that destroyed his children, yet he must have sinned, for the Almighty can do no wrong, so let him turn in penitence to God, lest the same fate overwhelm him. Cf. v. 8.

**6.** If Job repents and becomes pure, then God will restore prosperity to his now righteous habitation. Instead of 'awake for thee' the LXX reads 'answer thy prayer,' which better befits Bildad's scrupulous reverence.

**7.** This is one of the cases where the poet puts an unconscious prediction into the mouth of one of the speakers, which is later fulfilled.

**8, 9.** It is not quite clear on what principle Bildad considers the wisdom of the ancients to be superior. It may be that they lived much longer lives, and therefore could ponder the mysteries of life more deeply. Yet the speakers themselves are represented as belonging to the patriarchal age. Eliphaz is much older than Job's father, if in xv. 10 he refers to himself, and Job was not young at

9 (For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing,
Because our days upon earth are a shadow:)
10 Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee,
And utter words out of their heart?
11 Can the rush grow up without mire?
Can the flag grow without water?
12 Whilst it is yet in its greenness, *and* not cut down,
It withereth before any *other* herb.

---

the time. So Job's own life is a long one, since he lives a hundred and forty years after his restoration. On the other hand, this might seem short in comparison with the great ages of the earlier patriarchs, and Jacob counts his one hundred and thirty years few and evil, when set beside the life of his forefathers (Gen. xlvii. 9). Dillmann thinks the thought is rather that a single generation is too short to understand these things, we need to rest on the collective wisdom of mankind, as it has been slowly gathered through its generations. But in that case surely it is the heirs of all the ages who are 'the true ancients,' and each generation adds its own quota to the stock, the former age being less wise than the most recent. There may be the thought in his mind that the ancients stood nearer to the fount of wisdom, the stream becoming through successive ages more corrupt.

**11.** With this verse begin the wise sayings of the ancients. The Egyptian imagery suggests that Bildad regarded the Egyptians as possessors of the most ancient wisdom. It also affords evidence of the poet's acquaintance with Egypt.

**rush:** rather, as in marg. 'papyrus.' It will grow without mire, but it will not grow to its proper height. 'Grow up' means 'grow high.'

**flag:** marg. 'reed-grass.' It is an Egyptian word (*aḥu*) found only here and Gen. xli. 2, 18. It means Nile grass.

**12.** If water be taken away from its roots, even though it be in the lusty vigour of its greenness, not yet ripe and on the edge of decay, it will wither sooner than any herb.

**13.** The wicked, as the Psalmist says, may spread himself like a green tree in its native soil, yet he suddenly vanishes away. Similarly Eliphaz, v. 3. Instead of 'paths' we should probably read a similar word, transposing two consonants and slightly correcting another, translating 'such is the end' (*aḥărīth* for *orḥōth*). Duhm thinks that this verse with verse 20 formed a four-lined stanza. But since it is impossible to interpolate verse 20 between verses 13 and 14, he cuts out verses 14-19 as a later

So are the paths of all that forget God ; 13
And the hope of the godless man shall perish :
Whose confidence shall break in sunder, 14
And whose trust is a spider's web.
He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand : 15
He shall hold fast thereby, but it shall not endure.
He is green before the sun, 16
And his shoots go forth over his garden.
His roots are wrapped about the heap, 17
He beholdeth the place of stones.

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interpolation. This is a heavy price to pay, and it makes Bildad's speech very short, for this stage of the debate at any rate.

**14. break in sunder:** marg. 'be cut off.' The word might also come from a root meaning 'to loathe,' though this is unlikely. The parallelism requires a noun rather than a verb, corresponding to 'spider's web' in the second line. If we could accept the view that the word in the text is a noun meaning 'gossamer' this would give a most satisfactory parallel. Unfortunately this rests on inadequate evidence. Beer, followed by Duhm, emends the text and reads 'spider's threads.' Marshall follows Reiske in giving the sense 'gourd,' making a new metaphor begin here and continue to the end of verse 18. 'It is no longer a marsh-rush suddenly dried up at the root. It is a fine climbing-plant, growing over a ricketty house, which it crushes by its weight.' The sense is good, but the meaning 'gourd' is insufficiently supported.

**web.** The Hebrew word means 'house,' and it would have been better to translate it so, and thus make plain the connexion with verse 15.

**15.** Budde deletes this verse as a gloss on verse 14, but not on cogent grounds.

**16.** The godless man is now compared with a plant, thriving and firmly rooted, but destroyed and its memory disowned by the very soil on which it had flourished.

**17.** This verse is difficult. The word translated 'heap' may also mean 'fountain' as in Cant. iv. 12, and some take it so here, translating, as in the margin, 'beside the spring.' The meaning of the second line is very uncertain. The translation in the text gives the sense which the words would usually bear, though 'house' should be substituted for 'place,' but in this context it is quite pointless. Several scholars assume another verb with the same consonants meaning 'to pierce.' In that case we may suppose that the word translated 'place' really means 'between,'

18 If he be destroyed from his place,
Then it shall deny him, *saying*, I have not seen thee.
19 Behold, this is the joy of his way,
And out of the earth shall others spring.
20 Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man,
Neither will he uphold the evil-doers.
21 He will yet fill thy mouth with laughter,
And thy lips with shouting.
22 They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame;
And the tent of the wicked shall be no more.

**9** Then Job answered and said,

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as in the present text of Prov. viii. 2, Ezek. xli. 9. If so it is an Aramaism, but since the text in Prov. viii. 2 is uncertain, it would be simpler to correct the last consonant, reading *bēn* for *bēth*, and thus get the usual word for 'between.' We should thus obtain the excellent sense 'It pierces between stones,' retaining 'heap' in the first line. The sense 'pierce,' however, is very uncertain. Accordingly we should perhaps, with Siegfried and Duhm, follow the LXX, and altering one consonant read 'lives.' Siegfried translates, 'It keeps alive between stones.' Duhm's translation seems better: 'Its roots are twined about the spring, It lives in a house of stones,' i.e. the small building erected above the spring.

**18.** At last its life is cut short by irretrievable destruction, and no vestige of it is left. Its place disowns it, just as the sea is said in Isa. xxiii. 4 to disown its children.

**19.** Several think 'the joy of his way' is unsuitable, but no very satisfactory emendation has been proposed. If correct it is ironical.

**earth,** marg. 'dust.' From the ground which had given him birth others spring; he is forgotten and others fill his place.

**20.** Bildad closes his speech by affirming his conviction that God cannot reject the blameless or support the wicked, and by applying it to Job's case. **Perfect** has reference, in the author's mind, to the descriptions of Job in the Prologue.

**21.** The margin 'till he fill' gives the sense of the Hebrew as pointed. It is unsuitable, and it is better to point differently and translate as in the text: 'He will yet fill.'

ix. 1–4. Job replies to Bildad: True, man cannot be in the right against God, who, since He is all-wise and all-powerful, can entangle man into self-condemnation and put him in the wrong.

Of a truth I know that it is so : 2
But how can man be just with God?

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ix. 5–13. God controls all the forces of Nature, mountains and ocean, sun and stars, by His inscrutable power. None can hinder His elusive, all-powerful working.

ix. 14–21. How then can Job confront Him? rather he would cast himself on His compassion. Were he to cite Him and He appeared, yet He would not listen, for He overwhelms him with His persecution, and would force him, though blameless, to condemn himself. Hence, while his lips are free, he will assert his blamelessness, reckless of what may come upon him.

ix. 22–24. Blameless and wicked God destroys alike, mocking at the despair of the innocent. Injustice reigns throughout the earth, and it is God who is directly responsible for this.

ix. 25–35. Job now describes his fleeting, wretched life, and God's fixed determination to make him guilty, in spite of all he may do to establish his innocence. He cannot meet God on equal terms, and there is no umpire to enforce his decision upon them. Let God cease to afflict him, and not paralyse him with His terror, then he would speak fearlessly, knowing that in himself he had no need to fear.

x. 1–22. Weary of life Job pours out his complaint. Why should God persecute him, His own handiwork, and innocent? is this worthy of God? Let God think with what loving care He fashioned him, whom now He is bringing to dust. Nay, the love was mere seeming, all along God had meant to destroy him. Innocent or guilty it is all the same, God assails him with His miracles. Why then was he born? Let God give him a brief respite, ere he passes for ever to Sheol's utter gloom.

ix. **2.** Job accepts the general principle that God will treat the righteous according to his righteousness. But that is irrelevant to the real issue, which turns on the question, What constitutes righteousness? To be righteous means no more than to be in the right, and what is to prevent the Almighty from declaring the wicked to be in the right, or the innocent to be in the wrong? He sets the standard of righteousness, and if He is Himself immoral, the blameless may be branded as guilty, and against omnipotence can get no redress; there is no higher court of appeal. How then can man be 'righteous' before God if He is determined to put him in the wrong? Job here touches on the problem whether a thing is right because God declares it to be so, or whether He declares it right because it is so. He sees

3 If he be pleased to contend with him,
He cannot answer him one of a thousand.
4 *He is* wise in heart, and mighty in strength:
Who hath hardened himself against him, and prospered?
5 Which removeth the mountains, and they know it not,
When he overturneth them in his anger.

---

clearly that there is no necessity in the nature of things that omnipotence should be righteous. The friends had not disentangled the two conceptions, see note on viii. 3. Job is not endorsing Eliphaz's assertion that man must seem unclean to the infinite purity of God. Far from it this purity seems very dubious to him.

**3.** The margin is better, 'If one should desire to contend with him, he could not,' &c., since we thus have the same subject in both verses. If man wished to enter on a contest with God, he would be hopelessly worsted, for he could not answer one in a thousand of His subtle questions. It is very interesting that when God speaks out of the storm His speeches are composed almost entirely of questions to which Job can give no answer. The translation in the text seems to mean, If God be pleased to contend with man, he could not answer one in a thousand of God's questions. We might translate, He will not answer, i. e. God would not reply to one in a thousand of man's questions. This finds some support in verse 16, but is not probable.

**4. heart** is often used in the Bible when we should use intellect. It would be hopeless for man to pit himself against the wise and mighty God, whom none can withstand with impunity. There may be a reference to the case of Pharaoh in the second line, cf. also Prov. xxix. 1.

**5.** This description of the elemental convulsion in which the mountains are overturned reads curiously. What is the point of saying that the mountains do not know that God overturns them? Would they know it, whoever overturned them? It is explained that they are overturned suddenly, but we should have expected this to be differently expressed. The Syriac, followed by Bickell, Beer, and Duhm, reads 'he knows' instead of 'they know.' This gives the sense that God uproots mountains without knowing it; to His omnipotence it is so slight a matter that He does it unconsciously. This is probably the original reading, for so daring an anthropomorphism would seem too objectionable to be left unaltered. It is not at all too daring for the poet.

Which shaketh the earth out of her place, 6
And the pillars thereof tremble.
Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; 7
And sealeth up the stars.
Which alone stretcheth out the heavens, 8
And treadeth upon the waves of the sea.
Which maketh the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades, 9

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**6.** The earth was supposed to rest on pillars, which are probably to be identified with the roots of the mountains, just as their summits were the pillars on which the firmament rested. The verse is a poetical description of an earthquake.

**7.** The command to the sun not to shine may refer to eclipses or to storms. The sealing up of the stars expresses the thought that they are kept in their abode and sealed up there. Apparently they are regarded as dwelling in a certain part of the heavens, whence they are brought forth at night to shine in the firmament. Whether they appear or not depends on the will of God, who summons each by name, and by His great power compels them to come forth, so that none of those He calls is lacking (Isa. xl. 26), or seals up the door of their abode so that they cannot break out into the sky.

**8.** God is so strong that He stretches out the heavens by His own unaided power, cf. Isa. xl. 12, 22, xliv. 24, xlv. 12. We might also translate 'bends,' but this is less likely.

**waves of the sea:** Heb. 'high places of the sea.' Some think it is the heavenly ocean, 'the waters above the firmament,' that is intended. This is quite possible, since the rest of verses 7-9 is concerned with the skies. In themselves the words suggest rather the earthly ocean. A storm is described in which the waves rise like mountains and God walks on their crest. This verse and the following should be compared with two of the creation passages in Amos, viz. iv. 13, v. 8.

**9.** Cf. xxxviii. 31-33; Amos v. 8. The translation 'Orion' is generally accepted. The word seems to mean 'fool,' and the reference to his 'bonds' in xxxviii. 31 suggests a mythological allusion to a giant bound in the sky, probably in connexion with some Titanic revolt against God. The translation 'the Bear' is accepted by many, though several think it means the Pleiades, or, as Stern suggests, Alcyone, the most brilliant star of that constellation, the other stars of the group being her children (translated in xxxviii. 32 'her train'). It does not occur in Amos v. 8, and it may have come in here through dittography of the first two letters of the word translated 'which maketh.' It is irregularly

And the chambers of the south.
10 Which doeth great things past finding out;
Yea, marvellous things without number.
11 Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not:
He passeth on also, but I perceive him not.
12 Behold, he seizeth *the prey*, who can hinder him?
Who will say unto him, What doest thou?
13 God will not withdraw his anger;
The helpers of Rahab do stoop under him.

---

spelt, and we should have expected 'and' before 'Orion.' The translation 'Pleiades' is also that most generally accepted; we should perhaps identify, however, with Canis Major, in which the bright star Sirius is situated. In that case the 'chain' (see R. V. marg. xxxviii. 31) is the chain by which the 'Great Dog' is held by Orion, at whose feet he lies.

**the chambers of the south:** this vague term can hardly apply, as many suppose, to a constellation. Davidson says they 'are probably the great spaces and deep recesses of the southern hemisphere of the heavens, with the constellations which they contain.' It would be possible, however, to identify them with the storehouses of elemental forces, such as the storm, or light and darkness; cf. xxxvii. 9, xxxviii. 22.

**10.** Quoted from the speech of Eliphaz v. 9; but with a very different object. For Eliphaz bases upon it his counsel that Job should supplicate God, and illustrates it by reference to God's beneficence in nature and the equity of His moral government. Job insists on God's greatness, because he feels how much more hopeless it makes the case of one who contends with Him. His greatness is uncontrolled by goodness, and His power directed without compunction to immoral ends.

Beer, Duhm, and Fried. Delitzsch strike out verses 8-10 as an insertion, but on inadequate grounds.

**11.** Not only is God mighty, but His working is invisible, terrible because it is so elusive. He is an unseen enemy; His victim cannot guess where He will strike, he cannot prepare for the blow or parry it, but must await it in the agony of suspense.

**12. hinder him:** marg. 'turn him back.'

**13. God:** placed in an emphatic position in the Hebrew. Other powers may do so freely or by compulsion, but God lets His wrath wreak itself on its object to the bitter end. As an illustration, Job quotes the case of 'the helpers of Rahab.' The margin gives 'arrogancy' for 'Rahab,' but this is clearly inadequate, for

How much less shall I answer him, 14
And choose out my words *to reason* with him?
Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer; 15
I would make supplication to mine adversary.
If I had called, and he had answered me; 16
Yet would I not believe that he hearkened unto my voice.
For he breaketh me with a tempest, 17
And multiplieth my wounds without cause.
He will not suffer me to take my breath, 18

it is some definite event (translate with marg. 'did stoop') that is in the poet's mind, not a mere moral maxim. In Isa. xxx. 7, to which the margin refers, Egypt is called Rahab, so apparently Ps. lxxxvii. 4. Other passages which have been supposed to allude to Egypt are probably to be otherwise interpreted. The reference to Egypt is quite unsuitable here. Rahab is parallel to 'the dragon' in Isa. li. 9, and to 'the sea' in xxvi. 12. It is a name for Tiamat, already referred to more than once in the book. Her 'helpers' are her brood of monsters, who assisted her in the primaeval conflict with heaven. Even those mighty powers were crushed by the omnipotence of God.

**14.** How ill then Job would come off from a contest with Him, and quailing before the terror of His majesty, how incapable he would be of choosing the fit words in which to argue his case!

**15.** Job, even though innocent, would be unable to confront God and answer Him; he would rather be compelled to cast himself on the mercy of his adversary. The marg. 'to him that would judge me' does not bring out so well the force of the Hebrew.

**16.** If the text is correct the meaning is that if Job called God to judgement, and He answered the summons, he would refuse to believe that God would really listen to him. Duhm follows the LXX in inserting a negative, 'If I called, He would not answer me, I cannot believe that He would hearken to my voice.'

**17, 18.** The reason why Job thinks so gloomily of his prospects in a legal conflict with God. This lies in the treatment he is receiving at God's hands, which only too clearly displays God's temper towards him. Some think the verses describe how God would deal with him, if He were to appear in answer to Job's summons. So far from listening, He would assail him with extreme violence.

**breaketh:** the same word as that translated in Gen. iii. 15 'bruise.' The meaning is disputed, both there and here (see Bennett's note). Some take it 'to make at.'

But filleth me with bitterness.
19 If *we speak* of the strength of the mighty, lo, *he is there*!
And if of judgement, who will appoint me a time?
20 Though I be righteous, mine own mouth shall condemn me:
Though I be perfect, it shall prove me perverse.
21 I am perfect; I regard not myself;
I despise my life.
22 It is all one; therefore I say,

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**filleth me with bitterness:** cf. Lam. iii. 15.

**19.** It is not quite clear whether we should translate as in text, or as in marg. 'Lo, *here am I, saith he*.' If we retain the former, we should probably, with Duhm and Klostermann, read 'appoint him' in the second line. We should read the first person in both lines or the third in both. The marg. 'If *we speak* of strength, lo, *he is* mighty' is very unlikely.

**20.** The appearance of God would so overpower Job that, though blameless, he would confess himself guilty. It is not certain whether in the second line we should translate **it,** or, as in the marg., 'he'; the former is perhaps more probable.

**21.** Under the strong impression that when put to the awful test he might shrink before the terror of God, and confess under torture what in his inmost heart he knew to be a lie, he seizes the present opportunity to assert his innocence, 'Blameless I am.' He speaks in impassioned recoil from the terrible possibility, to which he feels he may be driven, that he may renounce the honour that is more to him than life. For he feels that to punish this outspoken declaration God may kill him out of hand, but he does not regard himself, in other words, he does not value his life enough to save it by silence.

**I regard not myself:** Heb. 'I know not myself.' The meaning is not that he is a riddle to himself, but that he holds his life of no account.

**I despise my life.** The two words, thus translated, are short for a line. Some omit them, but the first line thus loses its parallel. Duhm makes the line of normal length, by adding the next two words translated 'It is all one.' He then omits 'therefore I say.' As the next line is then left without a parallel he secures it by adding the last line of verse 24, where we have three lines. We should thus get the couplet 'He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked, If not he, then who is it?' This is one of those rearrangements that ought to be right.

**22. it is all one.** Job seems to mean 'it is all one and the same whether I live or die,' or possibly 'it is a matter of indifference

He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.
If the scourge slay suddenly, 23
He will mock at the trial of the innocent.
The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: 24
He covereth the faces of the judges thereof;
If *it be* not *he*, who then is it?
Now my days are swifter than a post; 25
They flee away, they see no good.
They are passed away as the swift ships: 26

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whether I speak or am silent.' The interpretation 'it is all one with the righteous and the wicked' is generally rejected on the ground that Job is just about to say this. In the second line **he** is emphatic, 'perfect and wicked HE destroys,' but God is left unnamed. Here Job explicitly denies that there is a moral order of the universe. Granted that God slays the wicked, this does not prove a sufferer to be guilty. For he slays with no moral discrimination good and bad alike. Thus Job contradicts Bildad's assertions in viii. 20.

**23.** The 'scourge' is one wielded by God, even though we do not read with the Syriac 'his scourge.' Job means great sudden calamities, like pestilence, which do not select their victims on moral principles. The innocent die as well as the wicked, and God mocks at their despair.

**24.** Injustice reigns over the whole earth, a condition of things due directly to God, who perverts the very organs of justice to make them instruments of tyranny. It is not unlikely that the circumstances of the author's time shape his expression. The words gain a fuller significance if the Jews were groaning at the time under bitter oppression from a world-empire. The second line seems to mean that God blinds the judges so that they cannot see what is right or wrong.

**25.** From this general indictment of God's government of the world Job returns to his own case. He complains that his life runs so swiftly to its end without his seeing good. Apparently he refers to the brief rest he might have expected before death came, though he may mean that in his life he has seen no good, his present pain blotting out the memory of former happiness.

**post,** or a 'runner' He means a swift messenger, chosen for his work on account of his fleetness.

**26. swift ships.** The margin says 'Heb. *ships of reed.*' This is the view generally taken, the word translated 'reed,' which does not occur elsewhere, being connected with a similar Arabic

As the eagle that swoopeth on the prey.
27 If I say, I will forget my complaint,
I will put off my *sad* countenance, and be of good cheer:
28 I am afraid of all my sorrows,
I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.
29 I shall be condemned;
Why then do I labour in vain?
30 If I wash myself with snow water,
And make my hands never so clean;
31 Yet wilt thou plunge me in the ditch,
And mine own clothes shall abhor me.

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word meaning 'reed.' They are the papyrus boats with wooden keels, used on the Nile, manned by one or two, and very swift owing to their extreme lightness.

**27. be of good cheer,** *lit.* 'brighten up.'

**28.** His resolve to leave off complaining and be cheerful is but momentary, for he knows that the paroxysm of pain will return. God will not hold him innocent, and will therefore continue to smite him.

**29.** The first line would be better translated 'I have to be guilty.' Why should he toil to establish his innocence, when whether innocent or not God was determined to make him out to be guilty. Duhm strikes out the verse as a prosaic gloss.

**30. with snow water.** Another reading is 'with snow.' The difference in the Hebrew is very slight. The latter is better, since snow water is not itself clean, and has no exceptional cleansing virtue. The latter objection might seem to lie against 'with snow,' accordingly some read, with a minute change in the Hebrew, 'like snow'; we might then compare 'whiter than snow' in Ps. li. 7 or 'if your sins be as scarlet, shall they be as white as snow?' in Isa. i. 18. This is not necessary, since the perfect whiteness of snow may have seemed to confer on it especial power of purifying. And it is unlikely, for in the second line mention is made of the instrument of purification ('with alkali'), and it disturbs the parallelism if we read 'like' instead of 'with' here.

**make my hands never so clean,** *lit.* 'cleanse my hands with lye,' i. e. alkali.

**31.** Lagarde, followed by Duhm, thinks the expression 'my clothes shall abhor me' too strange to be right, and suggests 'my friends,' with a comparatively slight alteration in the text. But

For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, 32
That we should come together in judgement.
There is no daysman betwixt us, 33
That might lay his hand upon us both.
Let him take his rod away from me, 34
And let not his terror make me afraid:
Then would I speak, and not fear him; 35
For I am not so in myself.

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the text gives a striking metaphor. Though Job washes himself with snow and cleanses his hands with alkali, Yahweh plunges him in the ditch, and thus makes him so foul that his clothes loathe to cover him. Job does not mean that however pure he may be in his own eyes he must seem vile to the infinite purity of God. He does not admit that God is justified in so regarding him. The meaning is rather that while he is really innocent God is bent on making him seem guilty, a loathsome spectacle of moral foulness. Fried. Delitzsch interprets strangely.

**32.** Quailing at the thought of the irresponsible might of God, Job utters the bitter cry that God and he cannot meet as man to man on equal terms. How then is he to secure a fair trial of his case?

**33.** The LXX, followed by several scholars, though not by Dillmann and Duhm, read the word translated 'not' with a different vowel, 'would that there were an umpire.' The duty of the 'daysman' or 'umpire' (marg.) would be to lay his hand upon both disputants, in other words, to make them submit to him and enforce his decision upon them. If God were only a man, or failing that if there were a third party who could represent one to the other, at present so estranged, so mutually unintelligible, who could enter with sympathy into the standpoint of each, then there might be a chance of even-handed justice, and a decision which both parties to the suit would be forced to accept. The human heart yearns for a human God. The Christian answer is not at all in the poet's mind, but the need to which it responds was his deepest craving.

**34.** Cf. xiii. 21, where Job makes a similar request. While God is smiting him with His pains, and terrifying him with His majesty, he is in no state to plead his cause. Let God not weight the dice against him, cease to distract him with agony, and, when He appears, not overpower him with awful dread, then collected and undismayed he would present his plea. Elihu takes up Job's word, and says that he at any rate fulfils the conditions (xxxiii. 7).

**35. I am not so in myself:** a vague expression. 'So' seems to

**10** My soul is weary of my life;
I will give free course to my complaint;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
2 I will say unto God, Do not condemn me;
Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.
3 Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress,
That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands,
And shine upon the counsel of the wicked?
4 Hast thou eyes of flesh,
Or seest thou as man seeth?
5 Are thy days as the days of man,

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refer to 'and not fear him,' and the meaning is that while he might be terrified by the circumstances, he had in himself no cause to fear, since his conscience was free from guilt.

x. **1.** Once again Job longs for death, and since life is so wretched, resolves, as in vii. 2, to speak out all the bitterness of his complaint, reckless though it may bring him a still sharper punishment. The complaint, however, is for the most part remonstrance or pathetic appeal.

**my complaint,** *lit.* 'my complaint with me.' The expression is strange, perhaps we should read, with a slight emendation, 'my complaint against Him.'

The third line is put together from vii. 11. Bickell and Duhm strike it out, and one line has to be eliminated if the scheme of four-lined stanzas must be maintained at all costs, unless we suppose that a line has fallen out after the first line, and divide the stanzas differently.

**3. Is it good unto thee.** It is not clear whether this means, 'does it please thee?' or 'does it befit thee?' or 'is it profitable to thee?'

**despise the work** (Heb. *labour*) **of thine hands.** Contempt for God's handiwork reflects contempt on God.

The last line is struck out by Bickell, followed by Beer and Duhm, and even by Budde. The thought is somewhat alien to the context, and the line seems to limit 'the work of thy hands' to the good as opposed to the wicked, whereas it more naturally means man as the creature of God, without reference to moral character.

**4.** Is God's persecution due to His inability to see more clearly than a mere man?

**5.** The meaning is generally supposed to be, Is God so short-lived that He must lose no time in punishing Job, lest He should

Or thy years as man's days,
That thou inquirest after mine iniquity, 6
And searchest after my sin,
Although thou knowest that I am not wicked; 7
And there is none that can deliver out of thine hand?
Thine hands have framed me and fashioned me 8
Together round about; yet thou dost destroy me.
Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast fashioned me 9
as clay;

---

die and His victim thus escape Him? Some think the verse explains verse 4: God is not short-sighted, for He is eternal, and has therefore had eternal experience, and thus gained perfect wisdom.

**6.** God seeks to discover Job's guilt by the sufferings He inflicts; He uses torture to make him confess.

**7.** The present text gives an excellent sense, God knows Job to be innocent, yet He seeks to drive him to confession of guilt; He knows that no one can deliver Job from His power, yet He overwhelms him with suffering as if at any moment he might slip through His fingers. The verse does not present the usual parallelism. The text of the second line has been emended by Beer and Duhm to secure a parallel to the first line. The emendation of the latter is preferable, since it is nearer the present text, 'and there is no treachery in my hand.'

**8.** Job begins to urge upon God the wonderful care He had lavished on him, to drive home the strangeness of His action in now destroying him. Instead of the somewhat curious 'together round about' the LXX reads 'and afterwards changing.' This is now generally accepted, because in addition to the peculiar character of the present text it involves taking part of the second line with the first, so that the division of the lines does not coincide with that required by the sense. It is not quite certain how the Hebrew should be restored, the sense would be something like 'afterwards thou turnest to destroy me.'

**9.** Barth, followed by Dillmann, takes the second line as well as the first to be governed by **remember,** 'I am formed of clay and must return to dust.' But there is no reference here to the common lot of mortals, for Job's meaning is that God is wantonly destroying His own handiwork, not that extinction must ultimately overtake him in the course of nature. He is not complaining that he must die, but that he must die before his time and so painfully. We must adopt the usual view that in the first line Job recalls the care God has taken in fashioning him, and in

And wilt thou bring me into dust again?
10 Hast thou not poured me out as milk,
And curdled me like cheese?
11 Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh,
And knit me together with bones and sinews.
12 Thou hast granted me life and favour,
And thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.
13 Yet these things thou didst hide in thine heart;
I know that this *is* with thee:
14 If I sin, then thou markest me,

---

the second line his surprise that He should reduce to dust that on which He has spent such pains.

**Remember:** God must be suffering from a strange lapse of memory, or He would remember what skill and labour He had lavished on that which He is now bent on destroying.

**10, 11.** These verses describe the process of his formation.

**12.** The first line seems to refer to his birth, the second to the subsequent preservation of his life. The Hebrew in the first line is a little strained, we should perhaps for 'life and favour' read 'grace and favour' with Beer, or 'life and length of days' with Duhm.

**13.** All this care had only masked God's sinister design, which He had cherished from the first, thus to overwhelm him with calamity. He wished to beguile Job into a happy confidence in His love, to eradicate all fear of misfortune, that the blow might fall on him with all the more crushing, paralysing force.

**I know.** Contrast xix. 25.

**14.** God's fell purpose, long entertained, is now exhibited in more detail from this verse to verse 17; we should translate 'If I sinned, then thou wouldst mark me, and thou wouldst not acquit me,' and similarly throughout the passage. It is possible to translate as in the text, in which case Job is describing God's present dealings with him rather than describing how God had treasured up His dark designs.

**If I sin,** as contrasted with 'If I be wicked' (verse 15), refers to slight as opposed to grave sins. Whatever he did, God had made up His mind to hold him guilty. If he should commit some trifling fault, if he should be guilty of some grave wickedness, even if he were innocent, he would be condemned just the same. It is questionable if we ought to establish any sharp distinction between 'thou wouldst mark me,' 'woe unto me,' and 'I must not lift up my head.' They are all rhetorical varia-

And thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.
If I be wicked, woe unto me; 15
And if I be righteous, yet shall I not lift up my head;
Being filled with ignominy
And looking upon mine affliction.
And if *my head* exalt itself, thou huntest me as a lion: 16
And again thou shewest thyself marvellous upon me.
Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, 17
And increasest thine indignation upon me;
Changes and warfare are with me.

---

tions for the same idea. Job surely does not mean that God would punish him more severely for a heavy than for a light offence. His point is that God had determined how he would treat him, and would not be moved by any considerations of Job's conduct. The immorality of God would hardly tally with such carefully graduated adjustment of penalty to offence.

**15.** The marg. 'I am filled with ignominy, but look thou upon mine afflictions; [verse 16] for it increaseth: thou huntest me as a lion' should be rejected; if the Hebrew text is right we must translate as in R. V. But 'looking upon mine affliction' is very flat and prosaic. A very slight alteration in the Hebrew gives 'drunken with affliction,' which is much more effective and forms an excellent parallel to the preceding words. We may translate, 'sated with shame, and drunken with sorrow.' The LXX simply reads 'I am sated with shame.' Beer and Duhm strike out the words, but it would be a pity to lose them. God's purpose was that even if Job were innocent, He should so overwhelm him with shame and sorrow that he could not lift up his head.

**16.** The first line is difficult, and some scholars omit it. The verb has no subject expressed; probably we should supply 'my head' as in R. V. Nor is it clear whether God or Job is compared to a lion; cf. Hos. v. 14, xiii. 7, 8; Lam. iii. 10. In the second line the bitter irony is heightened by the previous description of God's wonderful creation of him. He worthily matches the miracle of creating by the pains He now inflicts. God's present miracles are the tortures of a helpless creature by omnipotence.

**17.** Generally the last line is taken as a hendiadys: 'Changes and a host are with me,' that is, successive hosts assail him; so the margin, 'Host after host is against me.' But we should perhaps follow the LXX and Syriac, and read 'thou renewest a host against me.' The hosts God keeps sending are His pains.

18 Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?
I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me.
19 I should have been as though I had not been;
I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.
20 Are not my days few? cease then,
And let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,
21 Before I go whence I shall not return,
*Even* to the land of darkness and of the shadow of death;
22 A land of thick darkness, as darkness *itself*;
*A land* of the shadow of death, without any order,
And where the light is as darkness.

---

**18, 19.** Why should God have been so pitilessly set on His purpose as to bring Job to the birth? Could He not have relented so far as to suffer him never to have been born?

**20.** But since God has not spared him the tragedy of life, let Him listen to Job's touching appeal for the slender boon he now craves. Must his life be intolerable anguish, passing into Sheol's dismal gloom, with no brief respite of untroubled peace? Let God remember how short a span of life is left to him, how dreary the interminable darkness that awaits him, and grant him at least that this interval may be free from pain!

The Hebrew as written gives the sense translated in the R. V. marg. 'let him cease and leave me alone.' The reader is directed, however, to substitute different consonants, and the sense is then that given in the text, which is the more probable. We should perhaps read with the LXX, slightly altering the Hebrew, 'Are not the days of my life few? let me alone, that I may brighten up (see ix. 27) a little.'

**21. Whence I shall not return.** Cf. vii. 9, 10, xiv. 7-22.

**land of darkness:** yet Sheol, dreary as is its unutterable gloom, he feels, in some of his moods at any rate, to be better than life. There at least he will not be tortured.

**22.** Several scholars suspect this verse of being a later insertion. Its heaping together of various synonyms for darkness is strange. It would be better to abbreviate it than to cut it out, and we may omit three words in the Hebrew as due to mistaken repetition, translating 'A land of thick darkness, without any order, And where the light is as darkness.' This is just the place where Job may well paint Sheol in dark colours.

The reader cannot fail to be struck with the poet's skill in

Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said, 11
Should not the multitude of words be answered? 2
And should a man full of talk be justified?

---

depicting the tumult in Job's soul. He oscillates between the sense of God's ruthless injustice to him now and the memory of blessed fellowship with Him in the past. His pain is real, therefore God is his enemy; but the fellowship in the past was also real, was not God then his friend? He feels himself driven to the terrible conclusion that from the first God had nursed against him an implacable hate, and the better to gratify it had through long years set Himself to win Job's confidence that his calamity might not lack the uttermost bitterness, the sense that he had trusted and been betrayed. Yet even after he has expressed this conviction he closes with an appeal to God, an indication that the old temper of soul towards Him had not been killed out. Much of the interest of this drama of the soul lies in the growth of a consciousness in Job that God's present anger does not represent His inmost self. It is a mood that will pass, a dark cloud eclipsing His truest character. This thought does not, however, emerge as yet.

xi. 1-6. Zophar rebukes Job for his fluent babbling against God, who would soon convince him what depths of wisdom lay in His action.

xi. 7-12. The wisdom of God is unsearchable, none can restrain Him from working His will. He knows iniquity and His chastening leads to the sinner's reformation.

xi. 13-20. If Job will renounce iniquity a life of blessedness will be his portion, but the wicked shall be driven into desperate straits.

Zophar is a rougher type of man than the more dignified Eliphaz or the gentler Bildad. He is a vigorous and effective speaker, and for intellectual power ranks with Eliphaz and compares favourably with Bildad. But he is the most rasping disputant of the three. In Job's lengthy speech he can see nothing but long-winded babblings, the accusations hurled against God and Job's strong assertions of his innocence blinding him to its pathos and passionate appeal.

**2.** The length of Job's second speech irritated the impatient Zophar. He sees in Job a fluent rhetorician, the torrent of whose eloquence must not be suffered to sweep all before it.

**a man full of talk,** *lit.* 'a man of lips.' Job is a sophist, without genuine conviction or solid argument.

3 Should thy boastings make men hold their peace?
And when thou mockest, shall no man make thee
ashamed?
4 For thou sayest, My doctrine is pure,
And I am clean in thine eyes.
5 But Oh that God would speak,
And open his lips against thee;
6 And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom,
That it is manifold in effectual working!

---

**3.** Perhaps we ought to read 'should men be silent at thy babblings?' Job's mockery is not the sarcasms he has flung at the friends, but the blasphemies he has uttered against God.

**4.** The verse might be taken as a question, but if not, Zophar is summarizing the general drift of Job's speech, rather than quoting his actual words. According to the present text Job is said to make two statements, that the views he has enunciated are sound, and that he is innocent in God's sight. It is not easy to believe that the second line explains the first, My doctrine is pure that God afflicts those whom He knows to be righteous, for I was righteous in His sight, yet He has afflicted me. One cannot but feel that the two statements are somewhat unequally yoked together. Beer reads 'my walk' instead of 'my doctrine,' with a slight change in the Hebrew, though the sense is disputed. This yields a good parallelism, and is probably correct. For 'in thine eyes' the LXX reads 'in his eyes,' which is not an improvement, for it misses the point that Job says this outright to God's face. Siegfried reads 'in my eyes,' but though an accusation of self-righteousness, as if Job were the final court of appeal, is not inappropriate, the present text is better. What profoundly shocks Zophar is not Job's self-righteousness, but his assertion of God's unrighteousness. He is pure in *God's* eyes, yet God treats him as a sinner. The text also secures a much better connexion with verses 5, 6.

**5.** Job had said that God knew him to be innocent. But if God responded, as Zophar devoutly wishes He would, to Job's challenge to meet him, He would soon show him that so far from smiting him with unmerited punishment, He was really chastising him more lightly than he had deserved.

**That it is manifold in effectual working,** marg. 'For sound wisdom is manifold.' The word translated 'effectual working' is that translated 'enterprise' in v. 12 (see note). The word translated 'manifold' may also mean 'twofold.' But 'twofold'

Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine
  iniquity deserveth.
Canst thou by searching find out God? 7
Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

---

of what? Obviously not, as some have taken it, of Job's wisdom, for Zophar could hardly be guilty of the absurdity of assuring Job that God was twice as wise as he was, especially after Job had himself asserted God's wisdom in such strong language. 'Double what you think it is' would be less inadequate, but the words hardly mean this. We may therefore set aside the translation 'double,' and accept that in the text. But several scholars now make a trifling alteration in the Hebrew and for 'manifold' read 'like wonders,' or simply 'wonders.' Fried. Delitzsch interprets that two belong to true wisdom, i. e. man who claims to be right and God who admits the claim. It is hardly likely that this is the true explanation.

**exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth:** marg. 'remitteth (Heb. causeth to be forgotten) unto thee of thine iniquity.' The sense is probably 'brings a part of thy sins into forgetfulness for thee.' The suggestion that God is forgetful of a portion of Job's sin, does not remember it all against him, and therefore that his suffering is less than what he might justly have received, is not too rancorous for Zophar, the coarsest of the friends, though it is rather strong even for him at this stage of the debate. Nevertheless the LXX reading, 'that thy deserts have happened to thee from the Lord for thy sins,' while milder, is probably not to be preferred, and to omit the line with Bickell, who omits a good deal in verses 4–12, and Duhm is very unsatisfactory. We may contrast with this line the beautiful saying of the Second Isaiah, 'She hath received at Yahweh's hands double for all her sins' (Isa. xl. 2).

**7.** The translation of the first line is hardly defensible. The marg. 'Canst thou find out the deep things of God?' gives what is probably the true sense. The word translated 'deep things' probably means 'the object of search,' though the word may also mean 'the act of search' or 'the result of search.' If the act of search is intended, the meaning would be, can you discover the limits of God's investigation?

**find out the Almighty unto perfection.** For 'find out' another verb probably stood in the original text, not merely because the repetition is unlikely, but because the Hebrew is rather strange. The text would probably run originally something like 'Canst thou reach to the perfection of the Almighty?'

8 It is high as heaven; what canst thou do?
Deeper than Sheol; what canst thou know?
9 The measure thereof is longer than the earth,
And broader than the sea.
10 If he pass through, and shut up,
And call unto judgement, then who can hinder him?
11 For he knoweth vain men:
He seeth iniquity also, even though he consider it not.
12 But vain man is void of understanding,
Yea, man is born *as* a wild ass's colt.

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**8.** In what follows the reference is probably to the Divine wisdom, not to the Divine nature.

**It is high as heaven:** literally, as in the marg., 'The heights of heaven.' If this is correct the words are an exclamation, 'Heights of heaven! what canst thou do?' But as we have in the next three lines **deeper than Sheol, . . . longer than the earth, . . . broader than the sea,** we should clearly read here, 'It is higher than the heavens.' Zophar takes the extreme examples of height and depth, of length and breadth in the physical universe to set forth the vastness, the comprehensiveness and infinite range of God's wisdom, against which Job pits himself in vain.

**10.** Zophar takes up Job's own words ix. 11, 12. We need not suppose, with Duhm, that the verse is a misplaced portion of Job's speech. 'Call unto judgement' is literally 'call an assembly.'

**11.** The wisdom of God finds a sphere of action in His moral government. He knows the wicked, without needing to consider it, i. e. He has intuitive knowledge, and therefore does not depend on observation. The question arises here, as in several other passages, whether for *lō'* 'not' we should read *lō* 'to it': 'He seeth iniquity also and payeth regard to it.' The margin 'and him that considereth not' is not so good.

**12.** This is a very difficult verse. The translation 'is void of understanding' is dubious, the word bears this privative meaning in another conjugation (*Piel*), but it is questionable whether the conjugation here used (*Niphal*), as the word is pointed, can mean this. It would be quite easy to get over this difficulty, but the sense is not satisfactory; it is mere tautology to say that a hollow man is without understanding. Accordingly we should take the verb to mean 'will get understanding.' But, even then, there are more ways than one of interpreting the verse. The marg. 'But an empty man will get understanding, when a wild ass's colt is born a man' yields a good sense in itself, the second line then express-

If thou set thine heart aright, 13
And stretch out thine hands toward him;
If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, 14
And let not unrighteousness dwell in thy tents;
Surely then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; 15
Yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:
For thou shalt forget thy misery; 16
Thou shalt remember it as waters that are passed away:
And *thy* life shall be clearer than the noonday; 17
Though there be darkness, it shall be as the morning.

---

ing the idea of 'never,' like our 'when pigs fly.' But it does not spring naturally out of the context, and cannot be well fitted into it. It would accordingly be better to translate, 'So an empty man gets understanding, And a wild ass's colt is born a man.' Thus we get a good connexion with what precedes, God chastens the wicked, and thus the empty man gains wisdom. The wild ass's colt is the type of that which is undisciplined and hard to tame. The second line is strangely expressed. If the text is right it is probably a popular proverb. Budde slightly alters the text and reads 'is tamed.' We could then translate, 'And a wild ass's colt of a man is tamed,' the phrase being copied from the description of Ishmael, Gen. xvi. 12. Or we might read, 'A wild ass's colt is tamed,' supposing that 'man' is a subsequent insertion under the influence of Gen. xvi. 12, or to make sense after 'tamed' had been corrupted into 'born.' Siegfried unnecessarily omits the verse.

**13.** Zophar, like Eliphaz, closes his speech with exhortation, and a promise of prosperity, but, as is to be expected in a man of his temper and at this more developed exhibition of Job's attitude, he more openly assumes Job's guilt, and in the general statement as to the fate of the wicked with which he ends, does not exclude Job from those to whom it may apply.

**14.** The text assumes that Job is guilty of sin. Bickell and Siegfried quite needlessly strike out the verse. Duhm may be right in reading 'If evil be not in thine hand, and wickedness dwell not in my tent.' Nevertheless, the assumption of guilt is not premature at this point in the debate.

**15.** Zophar is referring to Job's complaint in x. 15.

**17. be clearer than:** marg. 'arise above.' Cheyne thinks the Hebrew, which is strange, cannot be correct; he reads 'And the days of thy life shall be as the noonday.'

**Though there be darkness:** this is the best way of taking

18 And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope;
Yea, thou shalt search *about thee*, and shalt take thy rest
in safety.
19 Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid;
Yea, many shall make suit unto thee.
20 But the eyes of the wicked shall fail,
And they shall have no way to flee,
And their hope shall be the giving up of the ghost.

**12** Then Job answered and said,

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the words as pointed; the meaning is that the very darkness shall be light, a striking antithesis to Job's description of the gloom of Sheol that awaits him, where the light is as darkness. Possibly the words may mean though a period of darkness has still to be endured, it will soon break into radiant dawn. The word may be a noun, 'Darkness shall be as the morning.'

**19.** The court favourite has many flatterers; when Job is once more God's favourite he will not lack this testimony to his dignity. In his prosperity he had received deep respect even from princes and the aged (xxix. 7–10, 21–25). Now, as he bitterly complains, the lowest ranks of society and those younger than himself have him in derision (xxx. 1–10), the very children despise and mock at him (xix. 18).

**20.** Bildad's prediction of the fate of the wicked is here repeated, but whereas he identified the wicked with Job's enemies, Zophar leaves open the possibility that Job may himself be included in that category, and in the last line significantly alludes to Job's repeated wish that he might die.

xii. 1–6. Job ironically praises the wisdom of the friends, but he is not inferior to those who utter such trite commonplaces. His friends mock him in spite of his piety; how easy for those who are fortunate to despise the wretched! while the wicked prosper.

xii. 7–12. All creation testifies to God's almighty rule; we should not accept all the teaching we hear, even though given by the aged, but discriminate.

xii. 13–25. God is both wise and mighty, none can undo His deeds; He overthrows the highest and turns the wisest into fools.

xiii. 1–12. Well does Job know God's manner of government; he has nothing to learn from the friends, but desires to reason with God. The friends would show themselves wiser if they were silent; they are flatterers of God because they dread Him, but their cringing flattery will draw down His anger. All their maxims are worthless.

xiii. 13–22. Let the friends be silent, for Job at whatever risk will speak his whole mind, and maintain his cause to God's face, confident of his innocence. But let God release him from pain and not appal him with His terror, then he will plead with Him as plaintiff or defendant.

xiii. 23–28. Let him know with what sins God charges him. Why does God hide His face in hostility? Why pursue with such rancour one so insignificant and so frail?

xiv. 1–6. Man's days are brief and full of trouble, why should God harass one whose life He has so rigidly limited? Let God release him from His watchfulness, that he may make the most of the time left to him.

xiv. 7–12. For the tree may bud again, though it be cut down and its roots decay; but man dies and his sleep knows no waking.

xiv. 13–17. Would that God might hide him in Sheol till His wrath were spent and then remember him! How gladly he would wait to renew at last the tender intercourse, when God would once more desire His servant, watch over him and forget his sin.

xiv. 18–22. But even mountains and rocks perish, and man is sent away by God into that state where he knows no longer how his dear ones fare on earth, but is conscious only of his own pain.

Hitherto Job had said but little in direct answer to the friends, though he had expressed his deep disappointment that they had failed him in his extremity (vi. 14–23), asserted the worthlessness of their arguments (vi. 24–26), and chidden their unkindness and blindness (vi. 27–30). It is with the conduct of God that he is most deeply engrossed. The thought of His immorality has a dreadful fascination for him, to that magnet the trembling needle constantly turns. Small need that the friends should talk to him of God; he knows it all, His wisdom, His might, His exaltation above His frail creatures. So with biting sarcasm he now assails them directly. Why do they vex him with such empty commonplaces? Is this their boasted wisdom? They are sycophants, who try to curry favour with God by smearing over His misgovernment with their lies. Yet even in this speech it is with God Himself rather than with the arguments of the friends that Job is concerned. His strength and wisdom he depicts more brilliantly than the friends, thus making good his assertion that he is not inferior to them. But as he describes its working he dwells more on its destructive than its beneficent operation. Yet it is

2 No doubt but ye are the people,

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God's relations to himself that absorb his deepest interest. Scorning God's self-appointed champions, he would fain confront God Himself, and as he had done in his previous speech, names the terms on which he would be willing to meet Him. From this his thought passes to the brevity of man's days, and once more he wonders that God should condescend to cast His malevolent regard on one so insignificant. It is not as though this life were to be followed by another. For then man would not be so unworthy of God's attention, and a second life might redress the miseries of the first. But this life is all man has, if that is not happy he will have no chance of happiness elsewhere. He will go down to Sheol, his eternal home. To Sheol, yes, but might not God hide him in that inaccessible abode till His wrath had spent itself? Then He might think once more on His servant, and long for the work of His hands, He might renew the old happy fellowship. Vain hope! man's banishment to Sheol is irrevocable.

Some scholars have impugned, in whole or in part, the genuineness of ch. xii. Siegfried, after striking out verses 4-6, omits xii. 7—xiii. 1 as an interpolation, intended to harmonize the speeches of Job with the orthodox doctrine of retribution. There was, however, a real reason why Job should emphasize God's might and wisdom. The friends spoke as if these attributes involved the righteousness of God. But experience has convinced Job that the Power that governs the universe need not be, and in fact is not, righteous. The friends argued, God is all-powerful and all-wise, therefore He can do no wrong; Job replied, true, God is all-powerful and all-wise, but He is unrighteous none the less, and does all the more evil, that power and wisdom guide His unrighteousness to its baneful ends. Kuenen admits that the objections to ch. xii are not groundless. The sequence leaves something to be desired, and chs. xiii, xiv form a complete answer to Zophar. Still, many difficulties may be due to textual disorder, and the poet may have let Job say more than was necessary on the wisdom or power of God, so as to show that he did not fall behind the friends. The chapter may be justified as a parallel to ix. 4-12. He adds that it is very unlikely that a later interpolator who wished to bring out Job's superiority to the friends should have done it in this way.

xii. 2. **the people:** some explain this to mean 'the right kind of people,' but it is now more generally taken in the national or tribal sense. It would then be like our colloquial repartee, 'you're everybody!' Naturally, Job sarcastically continues, when they die, wisdom will die with them. It is not, however, a very probable expression, and Klostermann may be right in his very

And wisdom shall die with you.
But I have understanding as well as you; 3
I am not inferior to you:
Yea, who knoweth not such things as these?
I am as one that is a laughing-stock to his neighbour, 4
*A man* that called upon God, and he answered him:
The just, the perfect man is a laughing-stock.
In the thought of him that is at ease there is contempt 5
for misfortune;
It is ready for them whose foot slippeth.

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ingenious suggestion that *'am* is a relic of ***hayyod**$^e$**'im***, the word being obliterated, with the exception of the two final consonants. If so the text ran originally, 'No doubt but ye are they that have knowledge;' cf. xxxiv. 2.

**3.** Zophar has hinted that by God's chastisement the hollow man gets understanding. Job, applying this to his own case, retorts that he has already as much understanding as the friends; indeed, every one knows the shallow commonplaces that constitute their speeches.

**4.** Siegfried, followed by Duhm, omits verses 4–6. The latter urges that this passage speaks of the godless who despise the pious, whereas Job is condemned by the godly for his supposed impiety. But Job speaks out of the consciousness of his own piety, and in his reference to the mockery to which he is exposed he does not mean that he was mocked on account of his godliness, which was not true in his case, but that in spite of it he was taunted with impiety. The meaning hardly seems to be that Job complains of the contempt displayed by the friends in that they offer him such elementary instruction. Ley thinks the second line is a description of the 'neighbour,' not of Job, and translates the third line 'a laughing-stock to the just, the perfect man.' In that case Job refers ironically to Zophar as one who called on God and was answered by Him, as a just and blameless man. Klostermann with a slight emendation gets the sense, for the second and third lines, 'Where has there ever been one who cried to God, and to whom the righteous answered with mockery?'

**5.** Not an easy verse, but if the text is sound the R. V. translation is to be adopted, except that we should perhaps take the word translated 'it is ready' as a noun meaning 'a blow.' Several emendations have been proposed, but they seem to be no improvement on the present text. Job means that it is very natural

6 The tents of robbers prosper,
And they that provoke God are secure;
Into whose hand God bringeth *abundantly*.
7 But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee;
And the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:
8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee;

---

for those who are in pleasant circumstances to despise the unfortunate; it is quite the world's way to hit the man who is down.

**6.** Although Job has simply said in verse 5 that the prosperous despise and buffet the wretched, the general maxim is coloured in his own mind by the thought of his own case, hence while he does not say that the wretched, who are thus scorned and mishandled, are righteous, the fact that it was so in his own case determines the form which the antithesis assumes in this verse. But Job not only contrasts the wicked with the unfortunate, but instead of dwelling as in verse 5 on the treatment they receive from men, asserts their unassailable position.

Siegfried, followed by Budde, reads 'Security of the tents belongs to the robbers and safety to those that provoke God.' The form of the verb translated 'prosper' is strange.

The third line is difficult. With the present text we should probably translate as in the margin, 'that bring their god in their hand.' The meaning would then seem to be that they worship their own power and make it their god, for which idea Hab. i. 11, 16 is generally compared. A simple emendation would be to transpose the preposition with Siegfried and Beer, and get the sense, Who lifteth his hand against God, but the construction is questionable. Duhm emends ingeniously and gets the sense 'to him that saith, Is not God in my hand?'

**7.** The wisdom which the friends have complacently been teaching Job is so rudimentary that the very animals possess it. It is not of any secret wisdom possessed by the animals that Job is speaking, such as is often ascribed to them in folk-lore, e. g. in the legends about Solomon. It is rather of a knowledge universally diffused, accessible to all God's creatures. The passage is to be treated as poetry, but antiquity did not draw the same sharp line between human and animal intelligence as we draw.

**8. speak to the earth:** Clearly we ought not to have the earth itself included in an enumeration of the various living creatures in the earth. We have beasts, birds, and fishes mentioned in the other clauses, accordingly we should have 'swarming things' in this line. Those who retain the present text take 'the earth' to mean or include 'all the forms of lower life with which

And the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.
Who knoweth not in all these, 9
That the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?
In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, 10
And the breath of all mankind.
Doth not the ear try words, 11
Even as the palate tasteth its meat?

---

it teems' (Davidson). But this puts an undue strain on the language. Ewald read 'speak to the living creatures of the earth,' but 'speak to the swarming things' would be better, since the word translated 'earth' is much like that translated 'swarming things.' It is questionable, however, if this is quite satisfactory. The word translated 'speak' is also a noun meaning 'plant,' and though it is not likely that plants are here included among animals, the alternative rendering is also open to objection. An imperative in the first clause of this couplet corresponds, it is true, to the imperative in the first clause of the preceding couplet. On the other hand, as in the line before and the line after we have 'the air' and 'the sea' mentioned, the question arises whether we should not retain 'the earth' and correct the word translated 'speak.' The best emendation is probably Hitzig's, 'or the swarming things of the earth.' Duhm's emendation 'or the crawling things of the earth' is perhaps transcriptionally easier, but the word is rare, occurring twice only in the O. T. and therefore not likely to occur here, since the three corresponding terms are the familiar ones. Dillmann's suggestion that the line may not be genuine can hardly be correct, for the parallelism requires it.

**9.** Cf. Isa. xli. 20. The margin 'by all these' may be right, the meaning will then be 'who does not know by means of all these creatures?' Or the meaning may be 'which among all these creatures does not know?' The mention of Yahweh, which is carefully avoided by the poet in the speeches (xxviii. 28 belongs to an insertion), is surprising. Some MSS. read Eloah, i. e. God, which may be original, or a correction to conform the verse to the poet's usage. If the poet wrote Yahweh it must have been by an oversight. The meaning of **wrought this** is not quite clear; certainly it does not mean 'has made this universe,' probably the sense is, has done as Zophar represented Him as doing; the lowest creatures all know that God is as strong and wise as you say.

**11.** Davidson thinks that this verse indicates that the ear as well as the eye (verses 7-10) is a channel of sound information.

12 With aged men is wisdom,
And in length of days understanding.
13 With him is wisdom and might;
He hath counsel and understanding.
14 Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again;
He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.
15 Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up;
Again, he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.
16 With him is strength and effectual working;
The deceived and the deceiver are his.

---

But it is the friends, rather than Job, who appealed to the wisdom of the ancients. Job lays stress rather on the judgement which the listener passes on what he hears than on the information he gets by listening. The point is, therefore, one should not believe all he hears, but test it and discriminate between false and true, as the palate distinguishes between nauseous and pleasant food. Job asserts his right to take up an independent attitude to the doctrines forced on him by the friends, and to their reliance on tradition.

**12.** If the previous verse has been correctly explained, this verse cannot contain a statement of what Job believes. He may be summarizing the view of the friends, as the margin takes it, 'With aged men, *ye say*, is wisdom,' or it may be a question expecting the answer 'No.' Duhm reads, 'Are years wisdom?' Some regard the verse as a later addition or as possibly misplaced.

**13.** In emphatic contrast to the view that wisdom belonged to the ancients, Job asserts that it is God who possesses wisdom, and might as well. The insertion of a single letter in the word translated 'counsel' would yield a word meaning 'strength,' and thus we should gain a complete parallelism with the preceding line (so Budde). Duhm regards the verse as a variant of verse 16, but the contrast between verses 12 and 13 is effective, and if 13 is eliminated the transition from 12 to 14 is rather abrupt.

**14.** Job now describes the working of God, in which His might and wisdom are displayed. He begins with God's destruction of cities, and then passes to His imprisonment of men in dungeons from which there is no escape. Probably some definite historical events are in the poet's mind.

**15.** He causes both drought and deluge. Cf. Amos v. 8, ix. 6.

**16. effectual working:** marg. 'sound wisdom'; see note on v. 12.

**The deceived and the deceiver are his:** apparently he means that God is responsible for both.

He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, 17
And judges maketh he fools.
He looseth the bond of kings, 18
And bindeth their loins with a girdle.
He leadeth priests away spoiled, 19
And overthroweth the mighty.
He removeth the speech of the trusty, 20
And taketh away the understanding of the elders.
He poureth contempt upon princes, 21
And looseth the belt of the strong.
He discovereth deep things out of darkness, 22
And bringeth out to light the shadow of death.

---

**17.** The first line bears a suspicious resemblance to the first line of verse 19, and the parallelism with the second line is anything but close. Duhm removes both difficulties by reading 'counsellors of the earth he makes foolish'; the measures taken to secure the result are rather drastic, but something of the kind is more suitable than the present text.

**18.** The first line apparently means that God loosens the bond imposed by kings. The word as pointed means 'correction,' a different pointing gives us the meaning 'bond,' though elsewhere the word occurs only in the plural. Not only does God free the king's prisoners, but He binds the kings themselves. Since to bind the loins with a girdle means to strengthen, we should probably read a slightly different word instead of 'girdle,' meaning 'bond' or 'fetter.'

**19. priests:** a very important order in Israel, still more so in some other nations, e.g. Egypt.

**spoiled:** the word may mean 'barefoot.'

**21.** For the first line see Ps. cvii. 40.

**the strong.** The word elsewhere means 'canals,' but this gives no suitable sense here. It is questionable if the word means 'strong,' that, however, is the sense required, and it can be obtained by a slight emendation. Cheyne reads 'greaves' instead of 'belt.'

xii. 22-25. Dillmann questions if all of this is original. Duhm suspects verse 22 on account of its abstract character; some reject verse 23. Budde strikes out verses 22, 24, 25.

**22.** The meaning is not clear. The **deep things** may be the secret plans of men, or the secret decrees of God, or the depths

23 He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them:
He spreadeth the nations abroad, and bringeth them in.
24 He taketh away the heart of the chiefs of the people of
the earth,
And causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there
is no way.
25 They grope in the dark without light,
And he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.
13 Lo, mine eye hath seen all *this*,
Mine ear hath heard and understood it.
2 What ye know, *the same* do I know also:
I am not inferior unto you.
3 Surely I would speak to the Almighty,

---

of His own nature. Duhm thinks that if the verse is genuine the sense suggested by the context is that while God overthrows the rulers He brings the poorer classes out of obscurity to honour. This gives a good contrast, but it seems a forced sense to impose on the words.

**23. bringeth them in:** generally the word is translated as in the marg., 'leadeth them away,' i.e. into captivity. This gives a good but rather questionable sense, since elsewhere the word means 'to lead' with a favourable significance.

**24. heart:** used, as often, of the intellect. As the first line of verse 21 is found in Ps. cvii. 40, so the second line of that verse is found in the second line here. The word for 'wilderness' is that used in Gen. i. 2 for 'waste' in the description of chaos.

**25.** For the reference to the 'drunken man' the same Psalm may be compared, Ps. cvii. 27. The word translated 'maketh them to stagger' is the same as that rendered 'causeth them to wander' in the preceding verse. When God deprives the leaders of understanding, they still keep on moving, but only in an aimless, witless way.

xiii. **1.** In answer to the accusation that he does not understand God's action, Job replies that he understands it perfectly well, as is plain from the description he has just given. This knowledge he has gained by his own observation and what he has heard from others. Nature and history alike have been his teachers.

**2.** He understands it as well as the friends. Their condescending airs of superiority are quite out of place.

**3. Surely** should be 'but'; it is the same word as that translated

And I desire to reason with God.
But ye are forgers of lies, 4
Ye are all physicians of no value.
Oh that ye would altogether hold your peace! 5
And it should be your wisdom.
Hear now my reasoning, 6

---

'but' in verse 4. It is not agreed whether Job means 'Though I know this well, yet I wish to plead with God,' or 'But I wish to speak to God, not to you.' The former is perhaps favoured by the repetition of 'but' at the beginning of verse 4, which suggests that the attack on the friends begins with verse 4. On the other hand the immediate impression made by verse 3 and supported by the context is that Job is contrasting debate with God and debate with the friends. So much so, indeed, that the suggestion made by some that 'but' should be struck out at the beginning of verse 4, as an incorrect repetition from verse 3, would have to be seriously considered, if its presence constituted an insuperable barrier to this view of the passage. Budde, however, thinks that the repetition is merely intended to sharpen the antithesis of verse 3. If this interpretation is correct verses 4-12 do not constitute a digression.

**4. forgers of lies:** cf. Ps. cxix. 69. 'Plasterers of lies' would be a nearer translation. The word translated 'forgers' is the participle of a verb meaning 'to smear over.' The meaning may be that they plaster Job with their false statements, so as to make him seem quite other than he really is. But more probably the meaning is that they smear their lies over God's government of the world, so as to cover up all its hideous defects and give it a fair appearance. Thus we get a thought similar to what we find in verses 7-12 when Job charges the friends with lying for God. Some give the verb the sense 'to sew' or 'stitch together,' and this seems to underlie the translation 'forgers of lies,' but this view is apparently incorrect.

**physicians of no value.** This is the usual translation, though some of our best authorities think the verb, of which the word rendered 'physicians' is the participle, bears here its original sense to patch, which gives apparently a better parallelism with 'plasterers of lies.' We might then translate 'patchers of vanities.' Unfortunately the verb seems not to occur elsewhere in this sense.

**5.** The friends have talked about wisdom, but so foolishly that their only chance of a reputation for wisdom is henceforth to hold their peace. Cf. Prov. xvii. 28.

**6.** We should probably, with most recent commentators, adopt

And hearken to the pleadings of my lips.
7 Will ye speak unrighteously for God,
And talk deceitfully for him?
8 Will ye respect his person?
Will ye contend for God?
9 Is it good that he should search you out?
Or as one deceiveth a man, will ye deceive him?
10 He will surely reprove you,
If ye do secretly respect persons.
11 Shall not his excellency make you afraid,
And his dread fall upon you?
12 Your memorable sayings *are* proverbs of ashes,
Your defences *are* defences of clay.

---

the reading presupposed in the LXX, 'Hear now the rebuke of my mouth.' This gives a complete parallelism with the next line.

**8. respect his person:** i.e. show partiality towards God; marg. 'shew him favour,' cf. xxxii. 21. The phrase literally means to lift up the face, and is used of judges who accept bribes and show undue favouritism in consequence, then it comes to mean to show partiality. It is also used in a good sense to show favour or kindness. There is a biting irony in the choice of this expression, considering the relative position of God and man.

**contend for God:** act as His special pleaders.

**9.** God is too great to be flattered, too keen of perception to be beguiled. It will not be a pleasant experience for them when God strips bare their paltry souls and shows that which masqueraded as pious reverence to be cowardly sycophancy.

**deceiveth . . . deceive:** marg. 'mocketh . . . mock.'

**10.** It is noteworthy as showing the conflict of feeling in Job, that while he attacks with the utmost boldness the unrighteousness of God's conduct he should have such deep-rooted confidence in His righteousness as to believe Him incapable of tolerating a lying defence even of Himself. As the poet does elsewhere, so here he lets an unconscious prediction fall from the lips of one of the speakers, cf. xlii. 7, 8.

**11.** Job knows the dread He can inspire only too well; one of the two conditions which he implores God to grant him, when He appears, is that His terror should not make him afraid (verse 21, ix. 34).

**12.** The 'memorable sayings' are their traditional maxims,

Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, 13
And let come on me what will.
Wherefore should I take my flesh in my teeth, 14
And put my life in mine hand?

---

with which they sought to silence Job, but they are ashes, dead, obsolete relics of what may once have been glowing convictions at which men warmed their hands.

**defences.** The word may mean the boss of a shield, and Duhm takes it so here, on the ground that a clay breastwork is not a contemptible defence. But the text gives a better sense; the poet is thinking, not of the toughness of clay, but of its brittleness as compared with stone.

**13.** He is a desperate man; vainly will his friends seek to restrain him from speaking all his mind to God's face, reckless of the punishment his rash defiance may provoke.

**14.** The verse is difficult. Its interpretation may start best from the second line. The proverb to put the life in the hand means elsewhere to expose oneself to deadly peril. It is quite clear from verse 13 that Job is not asking why he should endanger his life; he has just expressed his intention to do so. We are not warranted in imposing another sense on the words, and explaining, Why should I strive desperately to save my life? Accordingly the line cannot be a question; it affirms a purpose, I will take my life in my hand. The sense of the metaphor in the first line is disputed. Several think the figure is that of a wild beast, which takes its prey in its teeth and carries it away safely. In that case the verse would mean, 'Why should I seek to save my life? nay, I will expose it to the utmost peril.' But the close parallelism between the two lines is almost decisive in favour of taking them to mean the same thing. Probably no one would have thought of contrasting the two metaphors if it had not been for the interrogative at the beginning of the verse. If the two metaphors mean the same thing, the interrogative is as unsuitable to the first as to the second line. It does not seem to be legitimate to give the two words translated 'wherefore' a non-interrogative sense, as the margin does in its translation 'At all adventures I will take, &c.' Bickell, followed by Duhm and Klostermann, avoids the difficulty by attaching these words to verse 13 and thus making the second line of verse 13 of more normal length. The translation of verse 13 remains the same, but it is not clear that the phrase 'let come on me what upon what,' as we could translate it literally, can bear the sense 'let come on me what may.' It is a much simpler way to the same end to strike out these two words. They have clearly arisen through dittography of the last two

15 Though he slay me, yet will I wait for him:
Nevertheless I will maintain my ways before him.
16 This also shall be my salvation;
For a godless man shall not come before him.

---

words of verse 13, which are almost identical in Hebrew (*‘al māh* being an incorrect repetition of *‘ālay māh*). They are also wanting in the LXX. We should then translate, ‘I will take my flesh in my teeth, and my life I will put in my hand.’ Job will dare the uttermost peril, but speak he will.

**15.** This verse also is difficult. The A. V. translation, ‘Though he slay me, *yet* will I trust in him,’ which is that of the Vulgate, is impossible, since it is utterly out of harmony with the context. It is very beautiful in itself, and no doubt what Job ought to have said, and what he would have said after the vision of God. But it is singularly unfortunate, since it is one of the few fragments in the poem which are widely known, and has thus created an entirely false impression as to Job's real attitude. Unhappily the text is uncertain, and, as in some other cases, we have to choose between *lō’* ‘not’ and *lō* ‘for him’ or ‘for it.’ The R. V. translates the latter in the text. But the translation ‘Though he slay me’ is indefensible, for the line makes in the R. V. much the same impression as in the A. V. The margin gives what must be the general sense with this reading, ‘Behold, he will slay me; I wait for him,’ i. e. for Him to strike. We might translate ‘for it,’ i. e. for death. It is more probable, however, that we should read the negative. The R. V. margin then offers two alternatives, ‘I will not wait’ or ‘I have no hope.’ The objection to the former, adopted by Davidson and Dillmann, is that it does not yield a very good sense, though we may compare vi. 11. The latter is that more generally adopted, and is still retained by Budde, in spite of Dillmann's assertion that the verb does not mean ‘to hope.’ Duhm translates ‘I cannot hold out.’ In his *Job and Solomon* (p. 28) Cheyne translated ‘I can wait no longer,’ explaining ‘I can wait’ to mean ‘I can be patient.’ Now he reads, with a slight alteration, ‘I will not desist,’ i. e. from self-justification. The precise sense of the line is uncertain, fortunately the general sense is clear.

**16. This:** marg. ‘He,’ but less suitably. Job's salvation consists in what he proceeds to say in the second line, which should be introduced by ‘That’ as in the margin rather than ‘For’ as in the text. The meaning may be, God permits no unrighteous man to come before Him, this is my salvation, for I shall come before Him, and thus my righteousness will be manifested. Or the hindrance may lie not in God's exclusion of the wicked, but in the unwillingness of the godless to enter His presence. In

Hear diligently my speech, 17
And let my declaration be in your ears.
Behold now, I have ordered my cause; 18
I know that I am righteous.
Who is he that will contend with me? 19
For now shall I hold my peace and give up the ghost.
Only do not two things unto me, 20
Then will I not hide myself from thy face:
Withdraw thine hand far from me; 21
And let not thy terror make me afraid.
Then call thou, and I will answer; 22

---

that case the argument is, I am eager to come before God, this proves my righteousness. In any case the verse is noteworthy as an expression of Job's conviction of God's righteousness, in striking contrast to the mood which for the most part dominates him. Yet it would be quite possible for an immoral Deity to be strict in His demands on men, a Nero legislating against vice.

**18.** Job is prepared to plead his case against God; he has set in order his arguments, he is confident that he will triumph. We should substitute the marg. 'shall be justified' for **am righteous.** Job is not asserting his innocence, but his assurance that he will win his case and his innocence be made plain.

**19.** Cf. the similar words of the Servant of Yahweh, Isa. l. 8. No one will be found to undertake a case so unsupported by evidence. The second line seems to mean, If any one should be found to dispute my righteousness, I should die; though it may be taken as in R. V. The marg. 'For now if I hold my peace, I shall give up the ghost' is less likely.

**20.** As in ix. 34 Job asks God to grant him two requests in order that his trial may be fair, and he may be able to do justice to his case. Let God remove His afflicting hand and not overwhelm him with Divine terrors. Then he will plead as plaintiff or defendant as God may choose. He is so confident of his cause that his adversary may freely select the mode of procedure. When God does appear He fulfils neither of Job's requests. He speaks from the storm to Job still suffering from his disease.

It is rather strange that in explication of the negative general appeal the first particular should be stated in positive form. The general sense is clear, but formally, at any rate, the passage would have run more regularly if the first line of verse 21 had run, 'let thy hand no longer smite me.'

**22.** Cf. the similar expression in xiv. 15, but with how

Or let me speak, and answer thou me.
23 How many are mine iniquities and sins?
Make me to know my transgression and my sin.
24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face,
And holdest me for thine enemy?
25 Wilt thou harass a driven leaf?
And wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?
26 For thou writest bitter things against me,
And makest me to inherit the iniquities of my youth:

---

different a sense! Here a call to a lawsuit, there a call to fellowship and love.

**23.** Job begins his plea by a demand to know the charges against him. Like many another prisoner he has been kept in ignorance of the accusations he has to meet. He does not mean that he has committed no sins at all, but that he has done nothing which deserves punishment so severe. His suffering reflects God's attitude to him, how does God justify that attitude?

**24.** Some think that there is a pause after verse 23, while Job waits to be informed of the indictment his adversary has written, and that when God still keeps silence, he breaks out with the remonstrance 'Wherefore hidest thou thy face?' But probably the allusion is not to God's refusal to meet his challenge, but to His harsh treatment of him in general.

**25.** Once more Job pleads his insignificance as a reason why God should not deign any longer to harass him. He is like a leaf that has fallen from the tree and is driven by the gentlest breeze, or the light stubble that scuds before the slightest breath of wind. Should the Infinite One, with all the mightiest forces in Nature at His call, amuse Himself with the paltry sport of persecuting one so frail that he is at the mercy of the weakest forces? Has God no magnanimity, no self-respect, that He stoops so low?

**26. thou writest bitter things:** i. e. God ordains bitter punishment, not, as Hitzig took it, prescribes bitter medicine. The metaphor is not of a physician, but of a judge writing the sentence.

**the iniquities of my youth:** cf. Ps. xxv. 7. Job can think of no other explanation of his suffering. He is not conscious of any sin of his manhood that God could bring against him. God has therefore to go back and rake up the long past transgressions of his immaturity, a singular proof of His harsh determination to punish him, if not on good grounds, then on bad.

Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and markest all 27
my paths;
Thou drawest thee a line about the soles of my feet:
Though I am like a rotten thing that consumeth, 28
Like a garment that is moth-eaten.
Man that is born of a woman **14**
Is of few days, and full of trouble.
He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: 2

---

**27. in the stocks.** Since the next clause implies a certain freedom of movement on Job's part, this translation is hardly correct, unless the two clauses refer to different times, which is unlikely. We should therefore think rather of a block of wood fastened on the foot of captives to hamper their movements and thus prevent their escape. As a further precaution God sets a watch on all Job's paths, i. e. apparently the paths by which he might attempt to get away from God.

**soles of my feet:** *lit.* 'the roots of my feet.' God draws lines closely round Job's feet, which he must not pass. But the expression 'roots of my feet' is strange. Duhm thinks that 'my feet' has been repeated here by mistake, and strikes it out, getting the sense, with rather different pointing, 'thou cuttest a line about my root.' In that case the metaphor is of a tree, the roots of which are cut lest they spread too far. To complete a four-lined stanza he adds here the last line of xiv. 5, 'thou settest' (LXX) 'its bound that it cannot overpass.' This is quite possibly right, at any rate so far as concerns the elimination of 'my feet.'

**28.** As the margin 'And he is like' intimates, we have a third person, not a first person, in the Hebrew. Several critics think the verse is unsuitable in its present connexion, and either strike it out or place it elsewhere in the context. If Duhm's view of the preceding verse be adopted, this verse follows fairly well on it. The root of the tree being prevented from spreading, the roots that are thus laid open rot. We should in that case translate 'and it is like.' Cheyne thinks it is a variant of xiv. 2. His restoration may be seen *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, col. 2810.

xiv. **1.** It is probably best to take this verse as an independent sentence, though some, including Dillmann, think the sentence is completed in verse 2, translating 'Man, born of woman, few of days and full of trouble, cometh forth like a flower,' &c. Man's frailty is partly accounted for by his origin, he is born of woman 'the weaker vessel.'

**2. is cut down:** the marg. 'withereth' is probably to be pre-

He fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.
3 And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one,
And bringest me into judgement with thee?
4 [M] Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.
5 [A] Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months is with thee,
And thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;
6 Look away from him, that he may rest,
Till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day.

---

ferred, though the translation in the text is adopted by several. The LXX gives 'and falleth off.'

**3.** Job expresses amazement that God should scrutinize so minutely and punish so harshly the conduct of one so frail. For **me** it would be better to read 'him' with LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate.

**4.** We should certainly translate as in the marg., 'Oh that a clean thing could come out of an unclean! not one *can*.' The connexion is supposed to be: If man could only be free from sin, this severe punishment of sin would not be so unjust; but none achieve this freedom, and therefore, since all inherit a sinful nature, God ought to treat them more leniently. The passage is similar to iv. 17 ff., though Eliphaz urges the universal sinfulness of man rather in explanation of Job's suffering. We may also compare 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh.' The verse raises some difficulties. The second line, 'not one,' is abnormally short, and if this is not intentional may be a gloss, as Merx thinks, and as Dillmann admits may be the case. Philo omits the words. Ewald points the word translated 'not' differently, and gets the sense 'would that there were one.' Duhm thinks the shortness of the line is not due to its being a gloss, but to the omission of part of it. The thought required, he says, is, there is none without sins, and he cleverly suggests that a word meaning 'without sins' may have fallen out after the somewhat similar word translated 'out of an unclean.' It is very questionable, however, whether the verse can be naturally connected with its context, which reads much more smoothly without it. Bickell, Beer, and Cheyne strike it out, and Budde inclines to the same course. It is the sigh of a pious reader, written on the margin, and mistakenly introduced into the text.

**6.** Cf. Ps. xxxix. 13. The sufferer begs God to release him

For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will 7
sprout again,
And that the tender branch thereof will not cease.
Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, 8
And the stock thereof die in the ground;
Yet through the scent of water it will bud, 9
And put forth boughs like a plant.
But man dieth, and wasteth away: 10
Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

---

from His malignant watchfulness. Man's lot at the best is bad, all his pleasure is such as the day labourer finds in his irksome 'day.' Let God cease to torment and no longer grudge him this poor pleasure, but leave him to endure only the common lot. For **accomplish** the marg. 'have pleasure in' should probably be preferred.

**7.** In this and the following verses Job urges the hopelessness of any life after death as a reason for his plea in verse 6. It is still customary near Damascus to cut down trees, the stumps of which, through watering, put forth new shoots, as here described. We may well think that the poet, by placing in Job's mouth this reference to the tree's indomitable vitality, meant subtly to suggest that it is irrational to think that what is granted to a tree can be denied to a man, though he be frail as a flower. Yet he does not explicitly draw the inference. The thought of a happy future life is before him, but he cannot trust it confidently. It is very instructive to compare the 'how much more' of Jesus when arguing from nature to man. 'If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more shall he clothe you.' 'Fear not: ye are of more value than many sparrows.'

**10.** While the tree hewn down to its stump, and its root all decayed, still holds on so tenaciously to life that at the slightest stimulus, the mere scent of water, it bursts into new shoots and foliage like a tender plant in the lusty vigour of its early growth, man dies and lies prostrate, his old haunts know him no more, he never rises out of death's everlasting sleep.

**wasteth away:** marg. 'lieth low.' The LXX reads 'and is gone.'

**where is he:** if the LXX 'and is no more' represents a different Hebrew original, it seems to be clearly inferior to that in the text.

11 *As* the waters fail from the sea,
And the river decayeth and drieth up;
12 So man lieth down and riseth not:
Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake,
Nor be roused out of their sleep.
13 Oh that thou wouldest hide me in Sheol,
That thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past,
That thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!
14 If a man die, shall he live *again*?
All the days of my warfare would I wait,
Till my release should come.

---

**11.** Quoted from Isa. xix. 5, if that passage is earlier. Several critics strike it out here as an interpolation. But the first line of verse 12 implies that a comparison has preceded, and must also be omitted with verse 11. There seems to be no sufficient reason for this. 'The sea' is used here of a sheet of inland water, possibly a river, more probably a lake. In Isa. xix. 5 it means the Nile. We might turn Job's illustration against him, for in its time the river which has vanished returns in flood.

**12. Till the heavens be no more:** i. e. never. Geiger, followed by several scholars, reads 'Till the heavens wear out.'

**13.** After this strenuous denial of the possibility that man should be wakened from the sleep of death, Job passionately expresses the wish that it might be otherwise. Would that he might be hidden in Sheol while God's wrath continued, shielded from it in that inaccessible abode, and then would that God might call him back to life, once more to enter into communion with Him. It is not for a renewal of fellowship with God in Sheol that Job longs, but escape from Sheol to communion with God on earth. He contemplates concealment in Sheol only while God's wrath continues.

**until thy wrath be past,** for pass it will (vii. 8, 21). Cf. Isa. xxvi. 20.

**14.** As the text stands Job breaks off to put the question, 'Is a life after death possible?' and then, without staying to answer it, continues the thought of the preceding verse. The question looks like a marginal annotation. We might, however, read 'and' instead of the interrogative particle, with Duhm, 'If a man might die

Thou shouldest call, and I would answer thee: 15
Thou wouldest have a desire to the work of thine hands.
But now thou numberest my steps: 16
Dost thou not watch over my sin?
My transgression is sealed up in a bag, 17
And thou fastenest up mine iniquity.

---

and live again,' which is in every way suitable and has support from the LXX. The time of his waiting seems to include both the rest of his life on earth and his time in Sheol, till he returns to full life again.

**15.** Cf. vii. 21, where the same thought is expressed, but less fully. Sooner or later God's fit of anger will be over. Then He will wish to renew His communion with Job. If meanwhile He keep him in Sheol, and then when His wayward mood has passed call him, how gladly he would respond, forgiving and forgetting all the harsh treatment he had received.

**the work of thine hands:** with the creature's claim on the loving care of its Creator. So Job urges that God should not oppress or scorn the work of His hands (x. 3), and points the strange contrast between the pains and skill God lavished on the formation of him and the wanton destruction to which He is reducing him.

**16, 17.** According to the usual view we have here a description of God's present hostility to him, and this is the view taken by the Revisers. Budde, however, argues in a very long note that it is a continuation of the description in the previous verses. In that case we should translate 'for then' instead of **but now.** The words **thou numberest my steps** are usually thought to refer to the strict and jealous scrutiny which God maintains over all Job's conduct, watching narrowly for his slightest slip. But in themselves they may have a good meaning, for God may watch over his steps with kindly interest to help him forward in all his true aspirations. The second line of verse 16 is more naturally rendered as a statement than as a question, 'Thou wouldest not watch over my sin.' Some, in fact, who think the reference is to God's present persecution, think it is obviously better to take the line as a statement, and correct, with the LXX, **watch** into 'pass over,' 'Thou dost not pass over my sin.' The expression to seal up transgression in a bag may mean to keep it safely treasured up against the sinner, or to seal it up as a sign that it is done with and will not be remembered against him. A similar ambiguity attaches to the last line. The translation **thou fastenest up mine iniquity** rests on the view that the verb means 'to glue

18 And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought,
And the rock is removed out of its place;
19 The waters wear the stones;
The overflowings thereof wash away the dust of the earth:
And thou destroyest the hope of man.
20 Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth;
Thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.

---

over,' which may be explained like the parallel verb in a favourable or an unfavourable sense. Budde argues that the verb means 'to whitewash,' and, as applied to sin, 'to palliate.' If we accept his view, the picture of blessed fellowship with God, begun in the preceding verse, becomes much fuller, and the fact that verse 18 begins with a very strong adversative particle makes it likely that the description to which it is opposed extends to the end of verse 17. We should accordingly translate:

> For then thou wouldest number my steps,
> Thou wouldest not watch over my sin;
> Sealed up in a bag would be my transgression,
> And thou wouldest palliate mine iniquity.

Ley follows Budde in his view of the passage.

**18. And surely** should be 'But.' The connexion is, Such a future life is not to be hoped for, especially for so frail a thing as man. Even the mighty mountains perish and the hard stones are worn away, how can man escape this universal fate? Smend and Beer think the writer is contrasting the change to which all things are subject with the unchanging lot of the dead, but this seems not to be in his mind.

**falling**: it is objected that mountains perish even if they do not fall. Some read 'will surely fall,' but Duhm's suggestion 'will surely perish' is better, though the text perhaps needs no emendation.

**19. The overflowings thereof.** The Hebrew is a little irregular. Budde suggests 'waterspout,' slightly changing the Hebrew.

**thou destroyest the hope of man.** With what a crash this comes! But the sense is not quite clear. It is most obvious for us to think of the hope of a happy future life, cf. 'there is hope of a tree if it be cut down that it will sprout again' (verse 7). Yet this can hardly be described by so general a term as 'the hope of man,' since Job refuses to accept it, and the poet himself can do no more than wish it may be true.

**20.** In his last struggle for life God worsts him, and his defeat

His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; 21
And they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of
them.
But his flesh upon him hath pain, 22
And his soul within him mourneth.

---

is final. At the touch of death the face changes, soon to become a horror with corruption, and the soul passes to its banishment from God and all the warm life of earth.

**21, 22.** The dead have no knowledge of earthly affairs, even when they affect those dearest to them. They have utterly done with this life and all its interests, and are conscious only of their own pain. The marg. renders verse 22, 'Only for himself his flesh hath pain, and for himself his soul mourneth.' The text probably comes nearer the sense, though it translates the same word, **upon him** in one line and **within him** in the other. The word seems to be a more emphatic way of expressing 'his'; we might translate, 'But his own flesh hath pain, And his own soul mourneth.' It is very noteworthy that, while the soul is in Sheol and the body is in the grave, both are regarded as part of the self, and both suffer pain; the pain of the body being that caused by its decomposition—a gruesome thought.

The first cycle of the debate is ended, and its result has been to alienate the friends more and more from Job. They resent his tone of superior knowledge and the scorn with which he mocks their arguments. They had tried to be conciliatory and deal gently with the sufferer. But dear though their friend might be, truth was dearer still. And truth, as they understood it in this connexion, was the orthodox doctrine of retribution. Some grave sin must lie behind calamities so crushing and pain so intense. Yet they set out from the assumption of Job's fundamental piety, and seek to bring him to view his suffering as a chastisement sent in love for his good. But reluctantly they are compelled to abandon this position. Their well-meant admonitions exasperate the sufferer, conscious of his integrity, and goad him to yet more outspoken criticism of God's ways. If they resent his cavalier treatment of themselves, they are profoundly shocked by his attack on God. They meet the blaspheming heretic with outraged protestations and strenuous affirmations that God's ways are above criticism; He is Almighty and All-Wise, therefore He can do no wrong. Almighty and All-Wise He is, Job retorts, all the darker the wrong that He does!

And Job himself, how fared it with him? Certain of his own righteousness, yet sharing the friends' illusion that suffering

15 Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,
2 Should a wise man make answer with vain knowledge,
And fill his belly with the east wind?

---

proved the anger of God, he was shut up to the inference that God's government was unrighteous. It was where it touched himself that he was most sensitive to the unrighteousness of God's dealings, but the conviction borne in upon him by his own case opened his eyes to the misery in the world and proved his contention on the larger scale. He sees on the throne of the universe an irresponsible tyrant, with no lofty character to match His power and wisdom, but cruel and unrighteous, animated by petty spite to torture the helpless. Yet the memory of all that earlier happiness and blessed fellowship with God has not lost its spell. Though he confidently asserts that it was all part of God's deliberate design to let no bitterness be wanting in his cup, yet in other moods he feels that the God, whom it had been his bliss to know, represented God in His truest self; hence he believes that God's estrangement from him may pass away and that once more He will seek him in love. He even contemplates the possibility that God might keep him in Sheol out of the reach of His anger, and when the wrath had yielded to love, call him back to life on earth. This hope he sets aside, but the thought that since men have failed him God Himself must take up his cause indicates the line on which Job will advance.

xv. 1–6. Eliphaz reproves Job for his empty and violent words, and for the irreligious tendency of his speech by which he is self-condemned.

xv. 7–16. Is he the primaeval man, who listened in the council of God, that he deems himself so wise? Does he know anything with which the friends are not familiar, seeing that age is on their side? Are the Divine consolations insufficient for him? Why should he turn against God? What is man, the unclean, before the holy God in whose sight the very heavens are not pure?

xv. 17–35. The wise have taught the wretched condition of the wicked man. All his days he is troubled with presentiment of evil for his impiety towards God, and his fate is untimely and disastrous.

**2.** It is possible that Eliphaz may refer to himself as the wise man, asking if he should answer Job with angry words. In that case we should have a parallel in Elihu's bombastic description of himself in xxxii. 18–20. But this is very unlikely, Eliphaz is taking up Bildad's words in viii. 2, and asks Job if it is the part of a wise man, as he claims to be, to utter 'knowledge of wind,' to fill himself with the violent east wind that he may pour it out in

Should he reason with unprofitable talk, 3
Or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?
Yea, thou doest away with fear, 4
And restrainest devotion before God.
For thine iniquity teacheth thy mouth, 5
And thou choosest the tongue of the crafty.
Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I; 6
Yea, thine own lips testify against thee.
Art thou the first man that was born? 7
Or wast thou brought forth before the hills?

---

rasping and empty words. Job is, to use our colloquial term, a wind-bag, but the reference to the east wind brings out the turbulent and bitter character of his speech.

**3.** So 'wise' a man surely should not utter long speeches which avail nothing for his justification.

**4.** But his speeches are marred by a darker fault than bitter violence and windy ineffective rhetoric. They are calculated to do away with true religion, which Eliphaz characteristically calls 'fear.' The meaning of the second line is not quite certain. Usually it is explained as in R. V., **restrainest** being taken to mean literally 'diminishest.' For **devotion** the margin gives 'meditation.' Duhm explains that it is the reverential stillness which man should observe before God; to 'take it away' by loud and unseemly utterance is serious wickedness.

**5.** The marg. reads, 'thy mouth teacheth thine iniquity,' i. e. Job's speech makes plain his guilt, but the text is probably to be preferred. Job's wicked heart inspires his blaspheming tongue. He craftily defends himself by accusing God and the friends. Duhm suggests that 'the crafty' may have been a technical term for the wise of the world, whose serpent-subtlety (Gen. iii. 1) was opposed to the true wisdom, and their sceptical criticism to the fear of God.

**6.** There is no need for Eliphaz to condemn him, his own utterances convict him. Perhaps there is a reference to xiii. 6. 'What need we any further witness?' A man who talks against God is stamped by that very fact as a sinner of the deepest dye. That he denies his guilt and seeks to brand God with the stigma of immorality only makes his sin the more glaring. Duhm places this verse before verse 13.

**7.** Eliphaz now submits Job's claims to be so very wise to a fire of sarcastic questions that remind the reader of God's ironical interrogations in His speech out of the storm, especially

8 Hast thou heard the secret counsel of God?
And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?
9 What knowest thou, that we know not?
What understandest thou, which is not in us?
10 With us are both the grayheaded and the very aged men,
Much elder than thy father.

---

xxxviii. 4, 21. Since age brings wisdom, Job must be very old, seeing he is so wise! But mere age would not make him so very wise as he is. He must be the primaeval man, of whom the myths tell, a being brought into existence before the creation of the world, who because he sat in the Divine council and hearkened to the Divine plans is dowered with superhuman wisdom. The figure of this primaeval man occurs nowhere else in the O. T., but it has close analogies in the Divine Wisdom of Prov. viii. 22-31, 'brought forth before the hills,' and associated with God in Creation as a master workman. Dillmann compares Manu among the Indians. Duhm thinks that for 'hills' in this passage we should read 'the high ones,' i. e. the angels. We may, however, compare Ps. xc. 2 as well as Prov. viii. 25 for our present text, though Duhm's text would give an excellent sense, and harmonize well with the interest taken by the speaker in the angels.

**8.** The marg. reads, 'Dost thou hearken in the council?' if we substitute 'didst' for 'dost' we have the author's meaning. He is not referring to habitual attendance in the Divine assembly, but to presence at the heavenly council when the creation of the universe was planned.

**restrain** is the same word as that similarly translated in verse 4. Here it implies rather 'to draw,' as in several other passages; the line means, 'didst thou take wisdom into thyself?'

**9.** Returning from this lofty flight of the sarcastic imagination to the blunt actualities as he saw them, Eliphaz asks Job in what respect his knowledge surpasses theirs. 'What knowest thou that we know not?' What indeed, but crushing disaster, extreme pain, and the crash of that belief in whose strength he had lived!

**10.** Far from being the primaeval man, older than creation, he is not even the oldest in that company. Eliphaz is probably referring to himself; he is older than Job's father, therefore, he implies, much wiser than Job. He forgets that it is not mere length of days, but the intensity with which they have been lived that counts for wisdom, just as the grey-headed may become so not simply by lapse of time, but in a single night into which years seem to have been packed. Eliphaz had gained such wisdom as comes through long life to a high-minded and pious man, in

Are the consolations of God too small for thee, 11
And the word *that dealeth* gently with thee?
Why doth thine heart carry thee away? 12
And why do thine eyes wink?
That thou turnest thy spirit against God, 13
And lettest *such* words go out of thy mouth.
What is man, that he should be clean? 14
And he which is born of a woman, that he should be
righteous?
Behold, he putteth no trust in his holy ones; 15
Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.

---

sympathy with ancient tradition and not unvisited by revelations from the other world. But ripe as he was in many ways, his placid career had known no such tragic break as had taught the much younger Job the pressure of problems whose very existence was unguessed by Eliphaz, undreamed of in his philosophy.

**11.** The reference is to his former speech, which was mild in its tone and ministered **the consolations of God** in the thought of his blessedness whom God chastens. They were not simply his own words of comfort, but a Divine origin is claimed for them, inasmuch as the speaker was a recipient of celestial revelation. Job, however, felt that God's actions spoke louder than any words He might speak at third-hand through Eliphaz, all the more that He resolutely refused to speak Himself. The marg. gives in place of the second line, 'Or is there any secret thing with thee?' But the text is much to be preferred.

**12. wink,** i. e. roll in anger or perhaps pride. But some, including Budde, think that for this word, which occurs only here, we should read a very similar word meaning to be lofty, as in Prov. xxx. 13, 'There is a generation, Oh how lofty are their eyes!'

**13. spirit:** rather 'breath' in the sense of anger. The strangeness of the second line is mitigated in the R. V. by the insertion of *such* before 'words.' Instead of 'words' Duhm reads the word translated in xxiii. 2 'rebellious' or 'bitter.'

**14.** Cf. xiv. 4. In this passage Eliphaz returns to the thought already revealed to him in the experience related iv. 12-21. But here he speaks more strongly.

**born of a woman.** Cf. xiv. 1. Man's origin inspires no expectation of his purity; an Oriental estimate of woman.

**15. holy ones:** the angels as in v. 1.

**the heavens:** whether this is to be explained as the sky, or

16 How much less one that is abominable and corrupt,
A man that drinketh iniquity like water!
17 I will shew thee, hear thou me;
And that which I have seen I will declare:
18 (Which wise men have told

---

is a term for the inhabitants of the heavens, the angels, is uncertain. The material heavens are in Exod. xxiv. 10 a symbol of clearness. Dillmann and Davidson also appeal to the parallel xxv. 5. But the phrase 'the stars are not pure in his sight' rather favours the reference to heavenly beings, on account of the close connexion between the stars and the angels. The stars were regarded as animated beings. That, as Dillmann urges, in the thought of antiquity ethical and physical cleanness and uncleanness played into each other is true; yet the purity in question here is so distinctly ethical that we should probably let that, along with the parallelism with 'holy ones,' decide us in favour of taking 'the heavens' here to mean the heavenly beings.

**16.** The reference, as the context indicates, is to man in general, not to Job in particular, though Job if he likes may make this personal application. To drink like water is, as Duhm takes it, to drink in full gulps, stronger liquids being drunk cautiously; others take it, as eagerly as a thirsty man drinks water, or that it is as natural for man to do evil as for him to drink water. For **one that is** the marg. gives 'that which is.'

**corrupt:** originally used of milk that has turned. It occurs in Hebrew only here and in Ps. xiv. 3 = liii. 3, each time in an ethical sense.

**17.** Eliphaz, having completed his reproof of Job, now describes the evil case of the wicked, introducing it with three verses, guaranteeing it to be an ancient wisdom, unspoiled by foreign admixture. Ley omits verses 17-19 (18-20, *Das Buch Hiob*, p. 38, n. 1, seems to be a slip for 17-19). In verse 17 Eliphaz talks down to Job. The truth in which he will instruct him is certified to him by his own observation.

**18, 19.** Yet Eliphaz is a traditionalist just as much as Bildad, and what is in harmony with his own observation is guaranteed by the tradition on which it rests. The exclusion of foreign elements seems to refer to the time when the fathers formed the tradition rather than to the time during which their descendants, 'the wise,' transmitted it. The speaker seems to think that the native wisdom of the indigenous inhabitants could not have been created in its purity, had strangers imported their novel and, as a patriot would consider, lower ways of looking at things. The

From their fathers, and have not hid it;
Unto whom alone the land was given, 19
And no stranger passed among them:)
The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, 20
Even the number of years that are laid up for the oppressor.
A sound of terrors is in his ears; 21
In prosperity the spoiler shall come upon him:
He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, 22

---

poet speaks from some experience of racial contamination, and the inrush of new peoples into old-established settlements. He had probably heard the orthodox bewail the deterioration of theology that had arisen from these corroding influences. It is a sad fact that higher and lower races seem as if they cannot live side by side without moral deterioration for both. The worst qualities on either side seem to be brought into play, and the higher race in particular exhibits a fiendishness in its treatment of the lower that would antecedently have been regarded as wholly impossible.

**From their fathers.** The obvious translation of the Hebrew words would be 'and have not hid from their fathers.' Since this is impossible in the context, the text must be translated as in R. V. But since it is likely that the poet would not have expressed this thought in such a way that the language suggested a totally different and inappropriate thought, we should probably omit 'from' with the LXX, and translate 'And their fathers have not hidden.' The function of 'the wise' is not to create the true doctrine, but to transmit it. The creation lies with 'their fathers.' Antiquity is thus the test of truth, the earliest generations standing nearest to the source.

**20.** The teaching which the wise have handed down is now given. While the wicked lives in outward prosperity he is constantly tormented by forebodings of disaster. Instead of **travaileth with pain** several ancient versions, reading a slightly different word, give 'boasts,' which is adopted by Beer, but which does not suit the next verse very well. For the second line the marg. gives the less satisfactory alternative, 'And years that are numbered are laid up for the oppressor.'

**21.** All the time he fancies he hears the dreaded disaster coming upon him; he anticipates the spoiler in the midst of his prosperity.

**22.** He believes that when the darkness of misfortune, so long

And he is waited for of the sword:
23 He wandereth abroad for bread, *saying*, Where is it?
He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his
hand:
24 Distress and anguish make him afraid;
They prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle:

---

apprehended, closes in upon him, he will not be able to find his way into the light of prosperity. It is, however, quite likely that we should simply read 'He shall not depart out of darkness' as in verse 30, the first line of that verse being probably simply a variant of this.

**waited for:** several scholars adopt Ewald's suggestion to read 'laid up for' as in verse 20; the alteration is trifling.

**23.** Instead of **Where is it?** the LXX, adopting a different pointing, gives 'Vulture'; this cannot, however, be adopted without emending the first word. We might read with Siegfried 'he is given,' in which case the line would run, 'he is given to be vulture's food.' This follows well on the reference to his death by the sword; he dies on the field and vultures eat his flesh, cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 44; Isa. xviii. 6; Ezek. xxxix. 17–20. The second line might then remain as it is. But it is rather long. Several suggestions have been made to reduce it to normal length. Budde thinks **is ready** and **at his hand** are mutually exclusive variants. Some scholars follow the LXX and connect **the day of darkness**, which in the Hebrew stands at the end of verse 3, with the following verse. In that case further alteration of the text is inevitable. G. H. B. Wright translates 'He knows his doom is fixed.' For *'yādhō*, 'at his hand,' he very cleverly suggests *pīdhō*, 'his misfortune.' This word occurs also in xii. 5, and the correctness of the emendation, which involves the change only of a single letter, is made more probable by the fact that in xii. 5 we also have the word here translated 'is ready.' Otherwise Duhm's substitution of 'disaster' (as in xxxi. 3) for 'is ready' (*neker* for *nākōn*), suggested by the LXX, 'He knows that disaster is at his hand,' might seem preferable.

**24.** Connecting 'the day of darkness' with this verse we should translate, 'The day of darkness makes him afraid, Distress and anguish prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle.' The word translated **battle** occurs nowhere else (though Duhm thinks the same consonants should be similarly pointed in Isa. xxix. 3), and its meaning is uncertain, though the translation is probably correct. Duhm thinks the line hardly suitable here, and supposes it to have been originally a gloss on verse 26.

Because he hath stretched out his hand against God, 25
And behaveth himself proudly against the Almighty;
He runneth upon him with a *stiff* neck, 26
With the thick bosses of his bucklers:
Because he hath covered his face with his fatness, 27
And made collops of fat on his flanks;
And he hath dwelt in desolate cities, 28
In houses which no man inhabited,

---

**25.** Several scholars regard verses 25–28 (Duhm verses 25–28$^{b}$) as an insertion. Duhm argues that they describe, not the lot of the godless, but their manner of procedure, with reference, as it would seem, to particular people and circumstances no longer precisely known to us. But why should not Eliphaz justify the lot of the godless in this way? Granting that they speak of a tyrant rather than an individual in private station, this would not be unfitting as an extreme example. But it is not clear that he has anything so definite in his mind.

**behaveth himself proudly:** or as in marg. 'biddeth defiance to.'

**26. with** is better than the marg. 'upon.'

**27.** Budde thinks the description refers to the stubbornness of the sinner, generally the verse is supposed to mean that the sinner battens in luxury.

**28.** The sinner is guilty of such flagrant impiety that he rebuilds desolate cities, or houses that ought not to be inhabited. Cities might have been destroyed by the judgement of God, like the cities of the Plain, for their wickedness, or overthrown for idolatry (Deut. xiii. 12–18), or they might lie under the ban, like Jericho. Such places it was supposed to be wicked to rebuild. The ruins were haunted by uncanny monsters, Lilith and the satyr, as well as by such denizens of desolate places as are recognized by Natural History. Hence they were held in superstitious dread and carefully avoided, especially at night-time. An instructive commentary may be found in Isa. xiii. 20–22, xxxiv. 10–17. Of Babylon we read in the former passage, 'It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there.' A house might also be one that ought not to be inhabited on account of ceremonial uncleanness.

**inhabited:** marg. 'would inhabit,' but 'should inhabit' would represent the meaning better. Ley thinks the reference is to Nebuchadnezzar peopling ruined cities with captive Jews. He refers iii. 14 also to Nebuchadnezzar.

Which were ready to become heaps.
29 He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue,
Neither shall their produce bend to the earth.
30 He shall not depart out of darkness ;
The flame shall dry up his branches,
And by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.
31 [M] Let him not trust in vanity, deceiving himself:
For vanity shall be his recompence.

---

**Which were ready to become heaps.** This translation suggests that the houses were on the point of crumbling into ruins. The meaning of the text is rather that they were destined to become and for ever remain heaps. The LXX connects, in a different text, this clause with the first two words of verse 29. Duhm accepts this, and supposes that the quatrain, begun with the last two words of verse 23, is here completed, what he has gotten others shall take away ; he compares v. 5.

**29. their produce bend to the earth :** marg. 'their possessions be extended on the earth.' The word translated 'their produce' occurs nowhere else, and its meaning is uncertain. Moreover, the plural 'their' is difficult, referring to a singular antecedent. It is generally thought that the text is corrupt. Numerous emendations have been proposed, of these perhaps we might adopt Hitzig's 'neither shall their' (better 'his') 'ear of corn bend to the earth,' i. e. it is not filled with grain. Duhm thinks conjectures are useless, since several words must have fallen out ; the connexion, he says, shows that the godless is compared to a plant which goes to the ground. Siegfried gives up emendation as hopeless, and Ley leaves a blank. Hitzig rejected the verse, and Dillmann follows him, on the ground that 'he shall not be rich' does not suit the earlier part of the description. Budde retains the verse.

**30.** The first line is probably to be deleted as a variant of the first line of verse 22. The third line seems to mean in the present text, that he shall vanish by the breath of God's mouth. But this hardly suits the metaphor of a tree ; probably we should read 'and his fruit is whirled away by the wind.'

**31.** Following Beer, Budde, and Duhm we may with much plausibility regard this verse as a later insertion. It interrupts the metaphor of the tree with a rather abstract admonition which is also out of place at this stage. See, further, note on verse 35. **Vanity** means 'iniquity' in the first line and 'disaster' in the second.

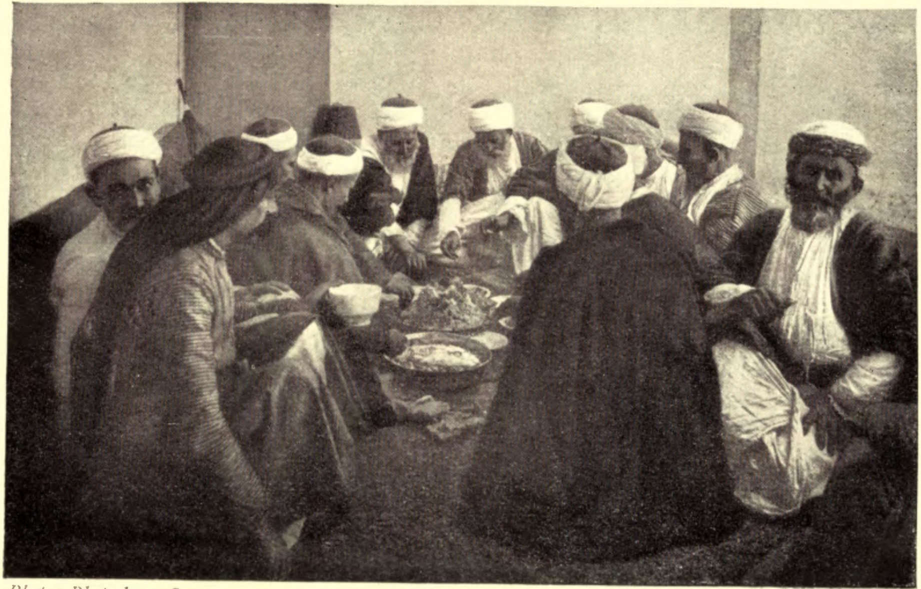

*Photo: Photochrom Co.*

AN ORIENTAL FEAST.

[A] It shall be accomplished before his time, 32
And his branch shall not be green.
He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, 33
And shall cast off his flower as the olive.
For the company of the godless shall be barren, 34
And fire shall consume the tents of bribery.
They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity, 35
And their belly prepareth deceit.

**32.** The present text gives a tolerable sense, but the parallelism is incomplete, and the LXX reads differently. Of the emendations proposed it seems best either to connect the last word of verse 31 with this verse, pointing it differently, so that instead of 'his recompence' we should read 'his palm-branch,' or leave 'his recompence' at the end of verse 31, but suppose that verse 32 began with the same consonants, only with the sense 'his palm-branch.' We should then translate 'his palm-branch shall wither before its time,' correcting 'shall be accomplished' (marg. 'paid in full') into 'shall wither' (*timmōl* for *timmālē*'). The word translated 'branch' in the second line means 'palm-branch.'

**33.** Hirzel points out that the vine does not cast its unripe grapes, we must then, if the metaphor is correct, take the verb in the sense that it does not bring its unripe grapes to maturity. On the second line Thomson may be quoted, 'The olive is the most prodigal of all fruit-bearing trees in flowers. It literally bends under the load of them. But then, not one in a hundred comes to maturity. The tree casts them off by millions, as if they were of no more value than flakes of snow, which they closely resemble' (*The Land and the Book*, pp. 54, 55). See further Wetzstein in Delitzsch's Commentary.

**34. bribery,** by which the rich won their case in the law-courts against the poor whom they oppressed, is here selected as a common and flagrant form of evil-doing.

**35.** The first line occurs also Isa. lix. 4, in a very similar form. Since in that passage we also have, 'they trust in vanity and speak lies,' we may assume that if verse 31 is a later addition it may have originally been a gloss on verse 35, suggested to a reader by the passage in Isaiah. Cf. also Ps. vii. 14; Isa. xxxiii. 11.

Eliphaz adopts here a tone strikingly different from that of his first speech. He had become convinced that Job's utterances about God were not mere surface froth, but represented his settled mind. With such a blasphemer strong measures must be taken, hence his picture of the fate of the godless, while intended as an answer to Job's assertion that it was well with the wicked, also

**16** Then Job answered and said,
2 I have heard many such things:
Miserable comforters are ye all.
3 Shall vain words have an end?
Or what provoketh thee that thou answerest?

---

served the purpose of holding up a warning to Job. As yet Eliphaz does not take the step of directly applying this to Job; it is a general description that he gives, but the application is all that remains to be made.

xvi. 1-5. Job replies that he would fain hear no more platitudes from his tormenting comforters; he could himself, were the positions reversed, administer to them the same eloquent lip-consolation.

xvi. 6-17. He now complains of God's settled hostility and the ferocious onslaughts He has made upon him, in spite of his innocence.

xvi. 18—xvii. 9. He appeals against his fate, and rises to the assurance that his vindicator is in heaven. From man he turns to God to maintain his cause, for soon he must die, in spite of the delusive hopes held out by the friends. Let God be his surety to God, for the friends have no understanding, though they invite Job to the feast of reason they provide. Job is a byword among the people, and reduced to the last extremities. [His case arouses the indignation of the godly, but the righteous shall hold on his way with increasing strength.]

xvii. 10-16. In spite of the glowing promises of the friends, life is at its end for Job. His only hope is Sheol and the grave.

**2.** Job begins by stigmatizing the speeches of the friends as made up of insufferable repetitions. He does not mean that he has heard at former times from others what they now tell him, but that they can only repeat the same things over and over again. That their speeches were a string of platitudes he has told them before; and it is bad enough to have to listen to platitudes once, but when these dreary commonplaces are reiterated by candid and condescending friends by way of consolation, the victim may well exclaim, 'I have heard enough of this talk from you and your friends. Tormenting comforters are ye all.'

**miserable comforters:** marg. 'wearisome comforters.' Cheyne translates 'tormenting comforters.'

**3. vain words:** Heb. 'words of wind,' with a reference to xv. 2, retorting Eliphaz's description of Job's speeches on himself. It is true to nature that the poet should make Job quite unconscious how full of provocation to the friends his speeches were.

I also could speak as ye do; 4
If your soul were in my soul's stead,
I could join words together against you,
And shake mine head at you.
*But* I would strengthen you with my mouth, 5
And the solace of my lips should assuage *your grief.*
Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged: 6
And though I forbear, what am I eased?

---

**4.** How easy, he scornfully reflects, to be dispassionately, coldly critical when our own welfare and reputation are not involved. He, too, could speak to them as they are speaking to him, were they the sufferers and he the critical spectator. He could play the unctuous moralist admonishing the transgressor, and scandalized at their behaviour shake his head over them. How differently he had himself acted is clear from the words of Eliphaz (iv. 3, 4), to say nothing of his own self-vindication at the end of the book.

**I could join words together:** I could compose eloquent speeches, eloquent because I could weave my words artistically together, the intellectual exercise being undisturbed by emotion. The rhetorical character of your speeches shows that they are not the warm inartistic outpourings of your heart.

**5.** The R. V. translation gives an excellent sense, but the sense intended by the poet is quite different. Job continues in the same scornful strain, the stress lying on my **mouth** and **lips**; he could offer them mere words in their sore need, as they now offer mere words to him.

Perhaps, following the LXX and some commentators, we should read in the second line, 'And my lip-compassion I would not spare,' this involves simply an insertion of the negative, and reading the verb in the first instead of the third person. The verb has no object in the present Hebrew text. Some read my 'lip-compassion would sustain you,' or 'I would sustain you with my lip-compassion.'

**6.** The sense of the verse appears to be that given by the R. V., though the connexion with the context is not very clear, and the expression with which the second line closes, which is literally, 'What departeth from me?' is rather strange. Duhm thinks that **grief** is here the inward pain of compassion, and that the verse continues the preceding thought, If he spoke, his compassion would not be spared, and if he were silent, his silence would be eloquent with sympathy. This very ingenious interpretation is exposed to the difficulty that the meaning imposed upon 'grief' seems a little strained, while the expression does not suggest

7 But now he hath made me weary :
Thou hast made desolate all my company.
8 And thou hast laid fast hold on me, *which* is a witness *against me* :
And my leanness riseth up against me, it testifieth to my face.
9 He hath torn me in his wrath, and persecuted me ;
He hath gnashed upon me with his teeth :
Mine adversary sharpeneth his eyes upon me.

---

a superficial, but a really heart-felt sympathy, and therefore does not well continue the ironical description of the preceding verses.

**7.** All his strength is spent, and God has deprived him of family and friends. Budde thinks that **now** should be 'Thou,' 'Thou, Thou alone hast wearied me out.' The change of persons in the present text creates a little awkwardness. Bickell divides the clauses differently and attaches to this verse the first word of verse 8. Duhm follows him in this, and with some textual changes gets the sense, 'Now He has wearied me out, astounded me, All my evil lays fast hold on me.' Job's reference to his **company** is curious, and the change to 'evil' is not difficult. Beer also emends on Bickell's lines.

**8.** According to the present verse-division God's grip of him is an expression for his calamities and disease. These testify to his wickedness. If we accept Bickell's division we should translate, 'It is a witness and riseth up against me, My leanness testifieth to my face.'

**laid fast hold:** the marg. gives 'shrivelled me up,' Dillmann objects that here this is too special, and in xxii. 16 impossible.

**leanness:** this translation is accepted by many scholars, and Ps. cix. 24 is quoted in support of it ; he is worn to a skeleton by his disease, which proves him to be guilty in God's sight. Dillmann denies that the word bears this meaning and translates 'my lie,' which he interprets to mean 'my sufferings' testifying falsely against me. But so artificial and prosaic an expression of this idea can hardly be attributed to the poet. Budde suggests 'my vexation,' slightly altering the text, as in vi. 2, xxiii. 2 ; cf. xv. 5, 6.

**9-11.** Job describes God's attack upon him under the metaphor of a wild beast rending his prey. **Persecuted,** marg. 'hated,' is somewhat unexpected in such a description. The LXX suggests 'cast me down.' The third line speaks of glances like swords,

They have gaped upon me with their mouth ; 10
They have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully :
They gather themselves together against me.
God delivereth me to the ungodly, 11
And casteth me into the hands of the wicked.
I was at ease, and he brake me asunder ; 12

---

stabbing their victim. It secures much greater regularity of structure and parallelism if we read the plural, 'Mine adversaries sharpen their eyes upon me,' and thus make a couplet of it and the following line. Siegfried deletes verses 10, 11, the first line of verse 10 being also absent in LXX. It is in favour of this that the description of God's attack is broken by references to attacks by men and resumed in verse 12. It might further be added that while the former is described in metaphorical language, the latter are set forth without figure in plain language. Duhm takes the same view as Siegfried, except that he includes the last line of 9. This is an obvious improvement, for, as already indicated, this line should go with the first line of verse 10. He thinks the insertion has been taken from a Psalm, and is unsuitable to Job's situation. The decision on the last point is bound up with the view taken of the references to the outcasts in xxx. The three couplets do not seem unsuitable to Job's condition, but they are apparently not in their true place. G. H. B. Wright says that the proper place for verse 10 is naturally after 11. The same suggestion occurred independently to the present writer, only it would be better to place verse 11 before the last line of verse 9, reading, of course, the plural in that line. In that way the attack of the ungodly is not mentioned as something independent of the attack by God, but as part of it—the lion assails his prey, but flings a share to his jackals. At the same time the lapse into plain speech in the middle of a metaphorical description, combined with the introduction of human enemies in the description of a Divine assault, suggests that these six lines, beginning with verse 11, perhaps came originally before or after the rest of verses 9-14.

**the ungodly:** not Job's friends, but the outcasts, who mock and maltreat him. The word in the text means 'boy,' so in this book, xix. 18, xxi. 11. Those who think the same word is used here take it to mean insolent knaves, as if insolence were a boy's main quality, so that 'boy' and 'insolent knave' might be convertible terms. It is better to read a slightly different word meaning 'unrighteous,' though some retain the present text, assuming that it is a distinct word meaning 'unrighteous,' which nowhere else occurs.

**12.** Job now describes God's attack, according to the present

Yea, he hath taken me by the neck, and dashed me to
pieces:
He hath also set me up for his mark.
13 His archers compass me round about,
He cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare;
He poureth out my gall upon the ground.
14 He breaketh me with breach upon breach;
He runneth upon me like a giant.
15 I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin,

---

arrangement of the verses, under the figure apparently of a wrestler, who suddenly seizes his unsuspecting victim and dashes him in pieces. But we get a much more satisfactory sense when we connect this closely with the first two lines of verse 9. The wild beast has torn his prey with his claws, now he seizes him by the neck and dashes him in pieces. A full stop should have been placed at **pieces,** for with the third line a new metaphor is introduced, that of God as an archer, which extends to the end of verse 13.

**I was at ease:** cf. Job's own description of his happy life before his calamity.

**13.** For **archers** the marg. gives 'arrows' or 'mighty ones.' The sense 'arrows' cannot be proved by other instances, but to avoid confusion in the metaphor it is necessary to assume it here with the Versions and many scholars. Having set Job up as a target, God shoots at him, first letting His arrows whistle all about him, thus keeping him in suspense, dreading that every shaft would strike its mark, then sporting with him no longer, but sending every arrow home into his vitals, till He has strewed the ground with them. The realism of the description is very powerful; cf. vi. 4.

**14.** The metaphor now changes to that of an assault on a fortress. The Hebrew is remarkable for its accumulation of p's, r's and ts's, *yiphr*$^{e}$*tsēni pherets ʻal-p*$^{e}$*nē phārets, yārūts ālay k*$^{e}$*gibbōr.* There is a good deal of onomatopoeia in the passage. Duhm places verse 17 after this verse. For 'giant' the marg. gives 'mighty man.'

**15. sackcloth** was worn next the skin (2 Kings vi. 30) in sign of mourning; it is not mentioned in i. 20 or ii. 8, but would be taken for granted. The expression is probably pregnant for, 'I have sewed sackcloth and put it on my skin;' though Davidson says that 'Job indicates that it is his habitual garment, which he

And have laid my horn in the dust.
My face is foul with weeping, 16
And on my eyelids is the shadow of death;
Although there is no violence in mine hands, 17
And my prayer is pure.
O earth, cover not thou my blood, 18

---

never puts off; though the word may also suggest the closeness with which it adheres to his shrunk and emaciated frame.'

**laid my horn in the dust:** the verb means properly 'to put into,' 'to thrust into.' It is an expression for complete humiliation, in contrast to the phrase 'to exalt the horn.' The marg. 'defiled' is adopted by some scholars, but there is no warrant for this translation; if it is preferred, a slight emendation would yield this sense.

**16. foul:** the marg. 'red' is better, though this scarcely brings out the full force of the word; his face is inflamed, we might translate 'flaming red is my face.' The weeping is caused by his losses, his pains, the unkindness of his friends, the enmity of God, though it may be added that it is one of the symptoms of elephantiasis. He feels, as the second line intimates, that death is closing in upon him.

**17.** His cruel fate has come upon him in spite of his innocence; cf. x. 7. We have a striking parallel in the fourth Servant-passage, Isa. liii. 9, 'Although he had done no violence,' and there is a parallel in the second line, with the clause 'and deceit was not in his mouth,' though less close. On which side dependence, if there is any, lies, is a question that cannot be settled by comparison of the two passages, but naturally depends for its answer on the general view taken of the dates of Job and the Servant poems. It is noteworthy that Job here makes no claim to sinlessness, noteworthy for its bearing on the identification of the Servant. In this verse Job contradicts the charge of Eliphaz in xv. 4, 5, perhaps also he repels what he felt to be the covert accusation in the concluding portion of his speech.

**18.** This picture of God's furious and persistent attacks upon him, so cruel, so undeserved, and his pitiful description of the sad extremities to which he is reduced, kindle his flaming indignation and wring from him a thrilling, passionate appeal against the injustice of his fate. The shadow of death is gathering on his eyes, there is no hope of recovery, he is to be done to death. Nothing is left then but a vindication of his fair fame for those who survive him. Hence he calls out to the earth not to cover his blood. It is a widely-spread superstition that blood spilt on

And let my cry have no *resting* place.
19 Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven,
And he that voucheth for me is on high.

---

the ground calls for vengeance on the murderer. Hence precautions were often taken to inflict death without bloodshed, or at least to prevent the blood from falling on the ground. Perhaps even the ecclesiastical appeal that the doomed heretic might be put to death without bloodshed, which seems only hateful hypocrisy since the tenderer death designed by the priests was at the stake, rested ultimately on some such superstition. But when blood had been shed the cry it uttered for vengeance (Gen. iv. 10; cf. Heb. xi. 4, xii. 24) might be stifled by covering it, or if the soil was porous the blood would sink in and gradually disappear. Hence Ezekiel, in the very striking passage xxiv. 7, 8, represents the blood shed by Jerusalem as poured out on the bare rock, so that it might not be covered with dust, 'that it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance.' Even after the earth had covered the blood it might again disclose it and thus secure the punishment of the guilty, 'the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain' (Isa. xxvi. 21). In Job's case there is no question of literal bloodshed, it is a very powerful expression of his demand that the wrong done him shall not be unredressed. Let his blood lie exposed, let its voice be unmuffled. The thought is developed in the second line. His cry is the cry of his blood, in which the soul resides, and Job desires that this cry shall have no resting-place. Just as when the body lies unburied the spirit wanders an unquiet ghost, finding no rest, so let his cry never cease to be uttered, wandering to and fro till it meets effective response. Like the importunate widow, or the elect who cry to God day and night, or the souls under the altar, the blood of Job will at last secure redress by its cry. Such importunity is a prophecy of success.

**have no** resting **place:** this gives the sense intended; the marg. 'have no more place' suggests a wrong idea.

**19.** Very fine is the transition from earth to heaven. Let earth not burke his case, for heaven will soon speak! When Job dies, and his blood cries for vengeance, as the cry moves through earth and heaven to find its answer, it will not fail of its quest. For even before Job dies, nay, even now as he speaks, his witness who will vindicate him is in heaven. He will not in His present estranged mood respond to Job; He has determined to slay him. But He will not remain always in this mood. And when the revulsion comes, and love wakes again in His breast, the cry of Job's blood as it smites on His ear will strike an echoing chord in His heart. He Himself will undertake the vindication of Job's

My friends scorn me : 20
*But* mine eye poureth out tears unto God ;
That he would maintain the right of a man with God, 21

---

honour. In this life Job expects no mercy from God. Nor does he anticipate that after he is dead God will reverse the decree He has executed and recall him from Sheol. He will have gone beyond recall. He does not, even at this stage, express the hope that he will know of his vindication. All that he says now is that after his death God will vindicate him. His honour was his chief concern. God had branded him as a criminal ; this was more intolerable than calamity or pain. At present to the world's eye all had gone ; but honour and fair fame would at last be retrieved, and this was greater than all else. Job has all along asserted God's knowledge of his innocence, but that He acts in spite of it ; now he attains the conviction that this knowledge will at length be suffered to come to its rights, and control God's attitude towards him. Cheyne emends the verse, 'Yes, I know it, my piercing cry is in heaven, And my shriek has entered the heights' (*EBi.* col. 2473).

**20.** Here again several emendations have been proposed. The first line is more literally 'My friends are my scorners.' But elsewhere, it is objected, the word means not 'scorner' but 'interpreter.' We have parallels, however, for this sense in Ps. cxix. 51 ; Prov. iii. 34. The line is short, but a simple remedy would be to read, as Budde suggests, 'scorners of their friend are my friends.' The LXX, followed by Siegfried and Beer, gives a different but inferior sense, attaching 'unto God' to the first line, 'My prayer would come unto God.' Duhm, by hints from the LXX and transposition of consonants, gets the sense 'So would be found for me my friend.' The second line is also altered by Siegfried and Beer in accordance with the LXX, though Duhm retains it as it is, in spite of Siegfried's dictum that no Hebrew could have so expressed himself. As the verse stands it is deeply moving. Mocked and betrayed by his friends, he lifts his face, all bathed in tears, to God. But he has only just complained of God as his bitter enemy, the implacable foe who has brought him to the gates of death. Yet to whom can the baffled one turn, when all human help fails him and his burden is too hard to bear, but to God? The native instinct, crushed by God's cruelty, still springs irrepressibly to seek its satisfaction in Him. In its uttermost extremity the soul flies from man to God.

**21.** The paradox of Job's plea comes out even more sharply. For the antagonist against whom Job wishes God to right him is no other than God Himself. The defendant implores the plaintiff to be his judge. He has already lamented that there is no

And of a son of man with his neighbour!
22 For when a few years are come,
I shall go the way whence I shall not return.

---

daysman between them (ix. 33), now he utters the striking thought 'Let God Himself be his daysman.' There is no one who is God's equal, who can confront God and force Him to do justice—no one but God Himself. The logical incoherence of the position must not disguise from us its religious depth. There is here no adumbration of distinctions within the Godhead, such as are expressed in the doctrine of the Trinity. For the distinction which hovers before Job's mind is that of contradictory moods in the same Being. In so far as these moods are thought of as successive there is no logical incoherence, but Job advances from this to the thought of an anticipation in the present of the mood of the future. Just now God is Job's settled enemy, by and by He will be his friend. But Job feels that this future mood may modify God's present action, He being conscious even now that His temper towards Job will change, and suffering this knowledge to protect Him from going too far. The religious feeling that comes here to such strange expression may be illustrated by the beautiful saying from the Qur'an, 'There is no refuge from God but unto Him' (Sur. ix. 119). The translation in the marg., 'That one might plead for a man with God, as a son of man *pleadeth* for his neighbour,' is to be rejected.

**son of man:** since the construction is harsh, we should, with Ewald and many scholars, read 'And between a man and his neighbour,' or 'friend.' If we retain 'son of man' it is simply equivalent to 'man,' the parallelism compelling the poet to express the same idea in different language. There is none of the later apocalyptic or Messianic significance attaching to the term, such as we find in Daniel, Enoch, and the New Testament.

**neighbour:** the natural impression made by the line in itself is that Job wishes his cause to be maintained against Eliphaz, so that in the first line Job prays God to vindicate him against his unjust treatment by God, and in the second to vindicate him against the unjust judgement of men. The parallelism would rather require us to regard God as the friend, but perhaps this would be too daring.

**22.** He invokes God to grant him this posthumous vindication, for in a few years he will go to his eternal home. The thought is not that God should intervene speedily, since otherwise he will be dead and intervention will come too late. It is Job's settled conviction that God will not vindicate him during his lifetime. Accordingly the text must mean that Job does not delay his plea, since he will die in a few years' time, and will then be in no

My spirit is consumed, my days are extinct, 17
The grave is *ready* for me.

---

position to utter it. But this is rather strange. No difficulty is created by Job's expectation that he may live on for a few years, for his disease may have been a lingering one; if it was elephantiasis, sufferers from it sometimes live for ten or even twenty years. But it is strange that Job should give as a reason why he makes this appeal now that only a few years are left him. There is no urgency where years are at one's disposal. Moreover, in the next verse Job seems to speak as if he were at death's door. The **few years** cannot therefore be well harmonized with the context. We cannot escape from this by the supposition that they include the whole of Job's lifetime, for this unduly strains the language. The text is accordingly suspicious. The Hebrew means literally 'years of number,' i. e. 'few years' (cf. 'men of number,' i. e. 'few men,' Gen. xxxiv. 30). The word for 'number' is very like the word for 'mourning.' Lagarde suggested 'years of mourning,' but the period of mourning extended over days rather than years. If we point the first word differently, with G. Hoffmann, we get the sense 'For the mourning-women shall come.' Budde's objection—that the way Job will have to go is not the way of the corpse to the grave, but of the spirit to Sheol, and that this will be trodden before the mourning-women come—is not decisive. As we see from the story of Jairus's daughter, the mourners were ready to raise the wail the moment death occurred. And were it otherwise, why should a poet be tied down to the strict sequence of events? It is further doubtful if Budde is right in the assumption that the soul was supposed to go to Sheol immediately after death. The belief was rather that for three days it tarried near the body. The emendation gives a picturesque detail in keeping with the pathetic tone of the passage, and is much to be preferred to the present text. The fact that the O. T. uses other names for the professional mourning-women is not, as Beer thinks, a serious objection. Siegfried strikes out this and the following verse, as the shortness of life is irrelevant to the context. But this is hardly justified in any case, still less with an emended text.

xvii. **1.** This verse is closely connected with the preceding. There is no reason to alter the text to harmonize the expectation of speedy death with the reference to 'few years' in xvi. 22, when that reference has been eliminated. The three short lines are unusual, but the irregularity is here effective, the broken utterances expressing Job's mood. The third line, literally 'graves for me,' is, it is true, surprisingly curt. Several emendations of the verse have been proposed.

2 Surely there are mockers with me,
And mine eye abideth in their provocation.
3 Give now a pledge, be surety for me with thyself;
Who is there that will strike hands with me?
4 For thou hast hid their heart from understanding:
Therefore shalt thou not exalt *them*.

---

**2.** As Dillmann says, an obscure verse. **mockers** is properly 'mockery,' but an alteration in the pointing would give the sense 'mockers,' and thus supply a proper antecedent for **their** in the second line. The second line is almost unintelligible. The meaning is thought to be that Job has continually before him the provocation of the friends. One may well believe that the poet would have expressed this thought plainly had he meant it. Budde reads, 'And through their deceits my eyes fail.' Duhm, 'And on bitter things mine eye abideth.' No certainty is possible; the general sense seems to be that Job complains of the delusive hopes, held out by the friends, of return to health and prosperity.

**3.** Probably the first line should run simply, 'Deposit now a pledge for me with thyself.' The pledge is that God will vindicate him. God gives bail to God for Job, the creditor becomes the debtor's guarantor. The metaphor suggests a pledge to pay a debt, Job on the contrary would have God undertake to prove that no debt is due. The request, however, has meaning only if Job anticipated that God would retain His animosity to him for some time to come. A pledge to act implies that action does not take place immediately. Job expects to die under God's ban. But before he dies, he wishes above all things to secure his future vindication, and therefore implores God to deposit now the pledge which will guarantee His effective justification of Job in the future. The passage is important as helping to fix the sense of passages more ambiguous, and as showing that Job has no hope for his character to be cleared till after death. For the singular dichotomy in God here postulated, see note on xvi. 21. Just as in Heb. vi. 13-18 God, because He can find none greater to give sanctity to His oath, makes Himself the third party, so to speak, by whom He swears, so here, since no other can meet God on equal terms, Job beseeches God to play at the same time these contradictory parts.

**strike hands:** the symbolical action by which a pledge was undertaken. Who else but God can give such a pledge as God would require?

**4.** The sense seems to be, 'Who else but God? For thou hast deprived the friends of understanding.' And since they are thus proved to be wanting in intelligence, God will not give them the

He that denounceth his friends for a prey, 5
Even the eyes of his children shall fail.
He hath made me also a byword of the people; 6
And I am become an open abhorring.

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victory over Job. The verse is omitted in the LXX, and is struck out by Bickell and Duhm. The thought springs from point to point rather rapidly.

**5.** A very difficult verse, for which numerous explanations have been proposed. Siegfried considers the text of the first line to be mutilated, and does not attempt a restoration. The R.V. translation seems to be a threat to the friends that their denunciation of Job will be punished by the suffering of their children. A threat is not quite in place, though in this context such an objection must not be pressed. A better sense is obtained if we translate, 'They give up friends for a prey, while the eyes of their children fail;' i.e. 'They basely betray their friend, and reck nothing of the misery they bring on the children, thus deprived of their natural sustainer.' Since, however, the Hebrew gives **his children,** not 'their children,' it is difficult to suppose that the children are the children of the 'friends.' The translation 'give up' may be defended, though Ley prefers to make a small change, by which he gets the sense 'cause to wander' (*yānīd* for *yaggīd*). It is best, however, to take the verb to mean 'invite,' and translate 'One invites friends to partake, while his children's eyes fail;' i.e. He keeps open house, and lets his own children starve. Job is quoting a popular proverb. The friends have no understanding, but they invite Job to partake of their wisdom, while they have not enough wisdom to supply their own needs at home. Duhm explains as R.V., but takes the verse to be a marginal quotation. The word translated **prey** is literally 'portion.' If we point it as a verb, 'to partake,' the verse becomes easier.

**6.** We might translate 'I am made,' taking the verb as impersonal. **He hath made** is difficult, since God in this context is not referred to in the third person. Some read 'Thou hast made.' **people** is properly 'peoples,' and the meaning is that the news of Job's misfortunes, quickly spreading among the tribes, to whom the fame of his prosperity and integrity had been known, has made him a byword.

**an open abhorring:** marg. 'one in whose face they spit.' The Hebrew is strange, and the word supposed to mean 'spitting' is *tōpheth*, but elsewhere this is used of the place where Moloch was worshipped in Jerusalem. We may best read *mōphēth*, and with another slight alteration get the sense 'And I am become a portent before them.'

7 Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow,
And all my members are as a shadow.
8 Upright men shall be astonied at this,
And the innocent shall stir up himself against the godless.
9 Yet shall the righteous hold on his way,
And he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.
10 But return ye, all of you, and come now:
And I shall not find a wise man among you.

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**7.** His constant weeping has made him almost blind, and his limbs are reduced to a shadow. The word translated **members** occurs only here. The line may carry on the thought of the preceding line, his eyes are so dim that the objects he sees flit before them like shadows.

**8, 9.** The upright will be so amazed at Job's calamity that they will rouse themselves against the godless; but in spite of the perversity of the moral government of the universe the righteous holds on his way and grows ever stronger. Davidson says, 'the passage is perhaps the most surprising and lofty in the book.' It is so surprising, in fact, that it is very difficult to believe that it could have been uttered by Job. The present writer had independently come to the conclusion that verse 9, and probably verse 8, could not have been uttered by Job, when he found that Duhm also cannot bring himself to believe that either of the verses belong to Job's speech. He thinks that, with the first line of verse 10, they are part of Bildad's speech, and should be inserted between xviii. 3 and xviii. 4. They do not suit badly there, and the first line of xviii. 4 thus gets a parallel in the emended first line of xvii. 10. The second line of xvii. 10 has then to be struck out, the insertion of it being required to adapt the displaced verses to their new context. In any case verses 8, 9, or verses 8-10, can go out without being missed, since verse 7 connects well with verse 10, or verse 11, better perhaps with the latter. To lighten the difficulty of verse 8 Merx proposed to transpose the two nouns in the second line, reading, 'And the godless shall stir up himself against the innocent.' This course is favoured by Dillmann and Beer, but rejected by Budde. It seems desirable if the verses are kept in their present context.

**10.** If this verse is in its original position, Job tells the friends to repeat their arguments if they like, but they will only stand convicted of folly by doing so. The first line is too long, and the

My days are past, my purposes are broken off, 11
Even the thoughts of my heart.
They change the night into day: 12
The light, *say they*, is near unto the darkness.

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word translated **all of you** has a third not a second person suffix, and is strangely pointed with the same points as the preceding word. Since it differs from it only by one letter, it has probably arisen through dittography. The elimination of it brings the line to a normal length. If we place the line before xviii. 4, we must of course read the singular. By **return** Job does not mean that his friends show signs of leaving him. The meaning is 'repeat your arguments, return to the assault.'

**11.** We have here three short clauses, where we expect two parallel lines of normal length. Further, the word translated 'purposes' is elsewhere always used in a bad sense, and the plural nowhere else occurs. The word translated 'thoughts' is said in the marg. to mean 'possessions,' and this is the usual view, though Dillmann and Duhm think it means 'wishes.' Numerous suggestions have been made. G. H. B. Wright reads, 'My days have exceeded my allotted time, The cords of my heart are broken.' Budde, 'My days pass on to death, The cords of my heart are broken.' In the correction 'cords' they follow the LXX. Duhm reads, 'My days pass away without hope, They destroy the wishes of my heart.' The general sense is fortunately clear, beyond this we cannot get. Siegfried regards verses 11–16 as a late interpolation.

**12.** This verse is even more difficult. Siegfried leaves a blank instead of the second line, saying, 'This hemistich is entirely without sense or coherence.' The first line seems to mean that the friends wish to make out that night is day, i.e. that Job may expect speedy recovery instead of death. The second line, as translated in R. V., seems to express the thought that the darkness of Job's present condition will soon give way to light, as we say, 'the darkest hour is before the dawn.' For **unto** the marg. gives 'because of,' which is a more justifiable rendering. Literally the word means either 'from the face of' or 'than the face of.' Neither yields a good sense. Ley alters the preposition, and reads 'A near day out of manifest darkness.' Duhm reads, 'The night I make into day, And light is darkness before me.' This gives a good connexion with the context. We should perhaps, however, prefer Budde's method, which is simply that of a redivision of the consonants in the second line, without emendation. We thus get the sense 'The light of their friend should indeed not become dark.'

13 If I look for Sheol as mine house;
If I have spread my couch in the darkness;
14 If I have said to corruption, Thou art my father;
To the worm, *Thou art* my mother, and my sister;
15 Where then is my hope?
And as for my hope, who shall see it?
16 It shall go down to the bars of Sheol,
When once there is rest in the dust.

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**13.** The marg. reads, 'If I hope, Sheol is mine house; I have spread my couch in the darkness; I have said to corruption . . . and where now is my hope?' This gives a very striking sense. If Job hopes, his highest expectation is Sheol for his home, a couch in its darkness, the pit for his mother, the worm for his sister. But what kind of 'hope' is that? The R.V. translation also gives a good though a less striking sense: If Job has made up his mind to Sheol and the grave, where is the hope of which his friends chatter?

**14. corruption:** this rendering rests on an improbable derivation. We should translate 'pit' as in the marg.

**Thou art my father:** since the word for 'pit' is feminine, this clause is strange, moreover in the parallel clause we have two nouns against one here. It is a plausible suggestion that the text ran originally, 'I said to the pit, "my mother," and to the worm, "my sister."' Then a reader, thinking to give greater completeness to the passage, added the words, 'Thou art my father.' Job reckons himself the near kinsman of the grave and the worm.

**15. as for my hope:** the repetition is curious. The LXX gives 'my good' for 'my hope,' and this is adopted by several scholars.

**16. to the bars:** this is the usual translation. But this meaning is ill-attested, and if 'bars' are here put for 'gates,' why should not 'gates' have been said? Even Dillmann admits that the text is corrupt. The LXX reads 'with me,' and is followed in this by several scholars. The translation **when once** is also dubious. Generally the word means 'together.' Budde transfers it to the first line in place of the word rendered 'bars,' and in the second line inserts 'surely' in the vacant place; he thinks it fell out through its similarity to the preceding word. Thus we get the translation, 'Together they go down to Sheol; where in truth there is rest in the dust.' We might, with the LXX, take the verse as a question, and translate the verb in the

Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, 18

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second line 'descend' (so Hitzig and Duhm). 'Shall they go down with me to Sheol, Shall we together go down to the dust?' This is perhaps the best view. We might also adopt the translation 'descend,' but make the verse a statement rather than a question (so several scholars).

In these two chapters, the text of which is unusually corrupt and the movement of thought often hard to follow, Job makes one great step forward. In his first speech in the debate he had uttered the thought that God would seek His servant in love, when he had gone beyond recall (vii. 8, 21), and the thought is repeated in the third speech (xiv. 15–17). In the latter passage he utters the wish that God might hide him in Sheol out of the reach of His wrath, and then, when it had spent itself, remember and summon him to renew the old relations. The stress in these passages is on the satisfaction of God's need for fellowship with His servant. Fascinated as he is by the thought, though he fully believes that God will feel this need, Job sets it definitely aside. He is going to Sheol, and from Sheol there is no return. Job's unsatisfied longing for God will be avenged by God's unsatisfied longing for Job. In the present speech Job leaves this aspect of the case out of account. He is going to Sheol, and that places between him and God an impassable gulf. But when he dies he leaves his fame behind him. And this fame is now smirched with the foul stain that God's unrighteous treatment of him has fixed upon it. It is the thought of his reputation that now troubles him, and leads to the passionate appeal to earth not to cover his blood. And the feeling that it is intolerable that justice should not be done him before the eyes of men inspires him with the new conviction that God will see him righted before the world. For himself he has ceased to expect anything, but he reaches the assurance that his fair fame will be cleared. At present he has not taken the further step of believing that he shall himself know of his vindication. According to the view of Sheol, expressed in several passages of the O. T. as well as in this book, its inhabitants in their shadowy existence were cut off from God and earthly life. Therefore Job has to die, with his honour tarnished, and cheered only by the moral postulate that God must some time or other vindicate him. But as yet he does not dare to think of himself as knowing in Sheol whether he has been righted before men or not. The feeling is much the same as that which prompted Dido's famous words, 'Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor.'

xviii. 1–4. Bildad asks why Job should treat the friends so

2 How long will ye lay snares for words?

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contemptuously; does he imagine in his rage that the order of the world will be deranged for his sake?

xviii. 5–21. The light of the wicked shall be put out; he is caught in a snare; affrighted by terrors, his strength is consumed; he shall be destroyed and his house made accursed, his memory shall perish, his posterity be cut off, while men are struck with horror at his fate. Such is the doom of the unrighteous.

**2.** The plural 'ye' addressed to Job is surprising, for Job is not to be thought of as a collective, as if he stood for the nation, nor are we to suppose that Bildad includes those among the listeners (if there were any) who have sided with Job, especially when Job has so bitterly complained of his complete isolation. Nor will the view that Job makes himself one with all other righteous victims of oppression suffice to explain the plural, where the reference is simply to Job's own speech. It is much simpler to correct the plural second person into the singular with the LXX. No doubt it is easier to explain how the plural was changed into the singular than to account for the singular being changed into an inappropriate plural. But the canon that the more difficult reading should be preferred has not an unlimited range of application. A difficult reading may be due to sheer carelessness, to stupidity, to misplaced subtlety, or to some accident.

**snares.** This word occurs nowhere else, and its sense is conjectured from Arabic. If the translation is correct the meaning seems to be that Job hunts for words in which to express his thoughts; he strains after a subtle dialectic, but after all it is mere words without substance. The reference to **words** recalls the earlier reproaches that Job's language was simply windy speech; the reference to hunting retorts on Job his own charge that the friends' speeches were artificial rhetoric. It is a singularly inappropriate charge, for whatever Job's speeches were, they did not consist of subtle, far-fetched sophistries, but gushed hot from his heart. The traditional interpretation of the word is not 'snares,' but 'end.' We should, however, to get this sense correct the text, with several scholars (reading *qēts* for *qintsē*), rather than translate the present text in this way. But then we are confronted by a further difficulty. 'How long wilt thou make an end of words?' is utterly inappropriate, and the words can hardly mean as the A. V. translated them, 'How long *will it be ere* you make an end of words?' Accordingly we should have to follow Duhm and strike out **How long** as introduced from xix. 2, the beginning of the next speech. The line, it is true, is rather long, but in view of the rather large alteration required if we translate 'end,'

Consider, and afterwards we will speak.
Wherefore are we counted as beasts, 3
*And* are become unclean in your sight?
Thou that tearest thyself in thine anger, 4
Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?
Or shall the rock be removed out of its place?

---

it is perhaps better to retain the present word and translate as R. V.

**Consider, and afterwards we will speak.** Job had charged the friends with lack of understanding. Bildad flings back the reproach. But we should rather have expected 'consider, and then speak,' as we should say, 'think, before you speak,' or 'be quiet, and we will speak.' Siegfried thinks two readings have been fused together. **Afterwards** is also a little strange in the present text. Siegfried and Duhm substitute different forms of the pronoun 'we.' It would be better probably to change the first person plural into the second singular, 'Consider, and afterwards speak.' The exhortation to 'consider' is not opposed to the charge of hunting words in the previous clause. If Job would only give as much pains to think deeply as he does to spinning rhetorical sophistries, then he might speak with a better right.

**3.** Bildad resents Job's contemptuous treatment of the friends, as if they had no more intelligence than cattle (cf. Ps. lxxiii. 22).

**unclean.** This translation is retained by some scholars, but usually the word is thought to mean 'stupid.'

**4.** Before this verse Duhm inserts xvii. 8, 9 and the first line of 10. See note on that passage. Job had charged God with tearing him in His anger, Bildad replies that it is Job who tears himself in his anger against God. The Hebrew expresses the thought here in the third person. The second and third lines ask Job if the world is to be turned upside down for him. The earth is designed to be replenished by man, is that purpose to be thwarted that Job's interests may be served? The rock is firmly fixed in its place, is it to be overturned for him? Bildad hits one of Job's failings as a sufferer, he was self-centred, though not an egoist by nature. The third line quotes xiv. 18; cf. ix. 5. Marshall very ingeniously connects with Job's cry to the earth not to cover his blood, 'That would make the place sacrosanct, a perpetual desolation . . . A tabooed rock would need to be quarried away to an unclean place before the field could be cleansed.' The difficulties in the way of this acute suggestion are that the language seems to contemplate a general desolation of the earth, whereas the blood of Job would defile only a limited

5 Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out,
And the spark of his fire shall not shine.
6 The light shall be dark in his tent,
And his lamp above him shall be put out.
7 The steps of his strength shall be straitened
And his own counsel shall cast him down.
8 For he is cast into a net by his own feet,
And he walketh upon the toils.
9 A gin shall take *him* by the heel,
*And* a snare shall lay hold on him.

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area; that no reference is made to 'the rock' in xvi. 18; that the third line should refer to a convulsion of nature rather than the act of man, according to its meaning in xiv. 18; and that the links of connexion with xvi. 18 are too subtle to make it likely that this was in the author's mind.

**5.** Cf. xxi. 17. **light** is a symbol of prosperity and happiness. For **spark** the marg. 'flame' would be better. The metaphors in the two lines have the same meaning. It would, of course, be possible to take the language in a literal sense, in which case it depicts the desolation of his home.

**6. his lamp above him.** The lamp which hangs from the roof of the tent.

**7.** A new metaphor, not, as some think, a continuation of the preceding, describing his cautious movement made necessary by the failure of his light. Cf. Prov. iv. 12, and for the enlarging of the steps, to give free movement, Ps. xviii. 36.

**steps of his strength.** The confident swinging stride which he takes in his manly vigour. The curtailing of his steps symbolizes that adversity is come upon him.

**cast him down.** This sense of the word is unusual. The LXX, followed by several scholars, reads 'cause him to stumble,' which requires the transposition of two consonants. His evil designs bring about his own ruin.

**8.** His evil walk brings him into the net. The **toils** in the second line are the lattice-work placed over a pit to conceal it. The wild beast walks on it, it gives way beneath his feet, and he is trapped, a vivid metaphor for the unsuspecting confidence out of which the sinner is launched into ruin.

**9.** It is remarkable how many words for 'trap' Bildad contrives to heap together, as if to suggest that the world is full of traps to catch the feet that stray from the right path.

A noose is hid for him in the ground, 10
And a trap for him in the way.
Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, 11
And shall chase him at his heels.
His strength shall be hungerbitten, 12
And calamity shall be ready for his halting.
It shall devour the members of his body, 13
*Yea*, the firstborn of death shall devour his members.

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**11.** And now he is harried by terrors, which close in upon him from every side. The hell-hounds are hard at his heels, yet as he seeks in mad distraction to escape from these it can only be by rushing to meet others as ghastly, while all about him his way is thickly sown with snares.

**chase him.** If this translation can be accepted, the sense obtained is excellent. Many emendations have been proposed, Siegfried does not attempt emendation, but leaves a blank in the text. For terrors on every side we may compare Magor-missabib, the name given by Jeremiah to Pashhur (Jer. xx. 3, 4) to express the terrors that would encompass him, also Jer. xx. 10.

**12.** The metaphor in the first line seems to be that his vigour is exhausted by hunger. But more probably the word translated **his strength** should be rendered 'his disaster,' which gives a parallel to **calamity** in the next line. 'Hungry shall be his disaster,' i. e. the disaster which is to seize him is hungry for its prey. If the expression be thought too curt, we could read 'disaster shall be hungry for him.'

**for his halting:** marg. 'at his side'; commentators are divided in their preferences.

**13. the firstborn of death** is generally thought to be death in its most terrible form, and to mean elephantiasis. The reference to the devouring of his members suits the ravages of disease. This, however, is by no means universally accepted. Marshall thinks it is the worm of corruption that is meant. He compares 'the worm shall feed sweetly on him' xxiv. 20, and we might also compare xvii. 14. Ley argues that since death is called 'the king of terrors' in the next verse, the firstborn of death must be the terrors that accompany death. In that case we have a further development of the thought in verse 11. But could these terrors be said to devour his members? Ewald and others think the firstborn of death is one doomed to death, for which we may compare the similar term 'a son of death.' In that case the connexion is, the wicked shall be so ravenous from hunger that he shall devour his own flesh; for which we should have a striking parallel in

14 He shall be rooted out of his tent wherein he trusteth;
And he shall be brought to the king of terrors.

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Isa. ix. 20, 'they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm.' The verse raises further difficulties. In the Hebrew the two lines begin with practically the same two words, this suggests that the text may have been assimilated, or that we have to do with variant forms of the same line. Moreover, the phrase translated **the members of his body** is strange. The margin says that the Hebrew means 'bars of his skin,' and what that means is far from clear; Marshall thinks of 'the skeleton, especially the ribs visible through the skin.' More generally it is thought to be 'pieces of his skin,' 'pieces' are then explained as 'members' and 'skin' as put for the whole body, which is rather violent treatment of the language. Duhm gets over the difficulty by supposing the two lines to be variants of which the second should be preferred. He translates, 'the firstborn of death devours his members.' This, however, leaves a parallel line to be found, and he finds it in the second line of verse 14, which involves the striking out of the first line. It is much more satisfactory to correct very slightly the text of the first line with Wright, Beer, and Budde and get the sense, 'By sickness his skin is devoured.' If this is correct, the meaning of the firstborn of death is fixed as the sickness referred to. We ought perhaps not to insist on defining it further than as fatal sickness, to argue that Bildad must mean the disease from which Job is suffering is to make the allusion to Job far too pointed. The lurid picture in this chapter is not simply a mirror in which Job is to see himself. It is still only a general description that we have, at the most with features introduced recalling Job's case, though this is by no means clear. It remains to mention that Siegfried reads for the second line 'death gnaws at his splendour,' and eliminates the first line as a gloss, made when the second line had been corrupted into its present unintelligible form. Klostermann instead of 'firstborn of death' reads the two words translated in Ps. xci. 3 'the noisome pestilence.'

**14.** The first line is literally, 'He shall be rooted out of his tent, his confidence,' the sense being that given in R. V. Some translate, 'His confidence shall be rooted out of his tent,' explaining 'his confidence' as his possessions, children, &c. But the order would probably have been different. Siegfried and Budde suspect that some other word than 'confidence' originally stood in the text.

**he shall be brought:** Heb. 'it shall (or thou shalt) bring him.' The subject is unnamed, 'it shall' is preferable to 'Thou' (i. e. God) 'shalt.'

**the king of terrors** is Death as ruler in the kingdom of the

There shall dwell in his tent that which is none of his: 15
Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.
His roots shall be dried up beneath, 16
And above shall his branch be cut off.
His remembrance shall perish from the earth, 17
And he shall have no name in the street.
He shall be driven from light into darkness, 18
And chased out of the world.

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dead. Siegfried leaves a blank for the rest of the verse after 'his tent.'

**15. that which is none of his.** If the text is correct, this is the meaning, but the Hebrew is strange. Siegfried leaves a blank in place of the words. Beer and Voigt most ingeniously read 'Lilith shall dwell in his tent.' Lilith is a night-demon of the vampire type, supposed, with other uncanny creatures, to haunt ruins. She is mentioned in Isa. xxxiv. 14, where the R.V. text translates 'night-monster,' but has fortunately placed 'Lilith' in the margin. Duhm gives a rather easier emendation.

**Brimstone.** Generally it is thought that there is an allusion to the fate of the Cities of the Plain, and that the brimstone is showered on the habitation from heaven. There might have been a custom of scattering brimstone on an accursed place, as salt was scattered; cf. Judges ix. 45; Deut. xxix. 23; Isa. xxxiv. 9. It is questionable whether there is any allusion here to Job's calamity. There is no mention of brimstone in the account of the 'fire of God' falling from heaven. This was the lightning, not fire and brimstone, moreover it did not fall on Job's habitation, but on the sheep.

**16.** Cf. Amos ii. 9. His family is destroyed, root and branch. Budde omits the verse on the ground that it comes too late in the passage and deranges the sequence of metaphors. For **cut off** the marg. 'wither' is preferable.

**17.** For **earth** it would be better to substitute 'land.' The word translated **street** means a place outside. Here it is difficult to translate. In verse 10 the word is rendered 'fields.' The reference is apparently to scattered homesteads in remote districts. Neither in the more crowded haunts of men, nor in the sparsely peopled districts, where memory is more tenacious because the competition of interests is less keen, will any recollection of him linger.

**18.** The verbs in the Hebrew are plural, the R.V. gives the sense. Duhm would prefer to point in the singular and take God as the subject. From the light of day he is chased into Sheol.

19 He shall have neither son nor son's son among his
people,
Nor any remaining where he sojourned.
20 They that come after shall be astonied at his day,
As they that went before were affrighted.
21 Surely such are the dwellings of the unrighteous,
And this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

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**19.** His posterity shall be extirpated. Instead of **remaining** we might better translate 'escaped one.' The words **where he sojourned** are literally 'in his sojournings.' Generally it is thought that the reference is to his own home. But the meaning may be in the home of friends with whom he occasionally stayed; none of his children would escape to take refuge with friends.

**20.** The translation in R.V. may mean that later generations, as well as the earlier generations, that lived after the catastrophe will be horror-struck by it. But this is in direct contradiction to the previous statements that the very memory of the wicked man should perish. The difficulty is only partially removed if we suppose **they that went before** to be his contemporaries. The natural impression made by the translation is that both his predecessors and successors will be amazed at his fate. Then we should have to conclude with Budde that his predecessors are thus astonished when he joins them in Sheol, just as the shades were astounded to see the King of Babylon (Isa. xiv. 9, 10). This, however, does not remove the difficulty caused by the reference to his successors. Accordingly it is best to translate as in the margin, though the words do not elsewhere occur in this sense, 'They that dwell in the west are astonied at his day, as they that dwell in the east are affrighted.' The literal rendering of **are affrighted** is 'laid hold on horror.' The verse means that when his day, i. e. his judgement, comes it provokes universal astonishment.

It is by no means clear that in this lurid picture of the wicked man and his fate Bildad intended Job to see the reflection of his own case. The grounds on which this is alleged by commentators are much too flimsy to sustain it. Where they suit Job's case the features are general and conventional, of specific features such as 'the firstborn of death' or 'brimstone' the former may not, the latter does not, suit Job. The speech says nothing new, except in expression. Quite apart from Job's own case, it was relevant for the friends to meet his assertions of the prosperity of the wicked with counter assertions. So far as Job himself might be wicked, the principles they affirmed applied to him. But there

Then Job answered and said, 19
How long will ye vex my soul, 2
And break me in pieces with words?
These ten times have ye reproached me: 3
Ye are not ashamed that ye deal hardly with me.
And be it indeed that I have erred, 4
Mine error remaineth with myself.

---

is nothing to show that they modelled their descriptions on his calamities. On the other hand, Ley's view that both Job and Bildad unite in depicting the conditions of their own time, Job describing the misery into which Nebuchadnezzar has brought the Jews, while Bildad predicts the fate that will overtake him, is far-fetched. The evils of the author's time no doubt colour some of the speeches, but more than this we cannot rightly discover.

xix. 1-6. Job remonstrates with the friends for persisting in their unkind criticism. Even had he erred his sin would not affect them. But it is God who has subverted his right.

xix. 7-12. Vainly he cries for help, God has hemmed him in, and assaults him violently.

xix. 13-19. All his friends, even his family and servants, have forsaken him.

xix. 20-22. In his dire extremity he appeals to the friends for pity.

xix. 23-29. Would that his protestations might be written, might be graven for ever in the rock. But he knows that his Vindicator lives, and will take up his cause on his grave, and though he must die, yet without his flesh he will see God, no longer estranged—an overpowering thought! Let his friends remember the judgement of God, and persecute him no more.

**3. ten times,** used for 'several times,' as in Jacob's complaint to Laban, 'Thou hast changed my wages ten times,' Gen. xxxi. 41.

**deal hardly.** The word is of uncertain meaning. It does not occur elsewhere, except possibly in Isa. iii. 9. Probably the R.V. translation comes near the sense. Numerous emendations have been proposed.

**4.** Job does not admit that he had erred, though the Hebrew would bear this meaning, for this is just what he will not, and indeed at this stage cannot, admit. He accepts the friends' view for the sake of argument. Granted that he had sinned, his error remained with himself. The meaning of the second line is much

5 If indeed ye will magnify yourselves against me,
And plead against me my reproach:
6 Know now that God hath subverted me *in my cause*,
And hath compassed me with his net.
7 Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard:
I cry for help, but there is no judgement.
8 He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass,
And hath set darkness in my paths.

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disputed. We may explain, My sin is my own concern, it is not your business; or, My sin hurts no one but myself, it does not injure you; or, it is something which I alone can know, you have nothing but inference, guess-work, to go upon. Any one of these Job might have said. Probably we should adopt the second view, on account of the parallel in vii. 20, 'If I have sinned, what do I unto thee, O thou watcher of men?' As there Job means that his sin, even granted he had committed it, cannot hurt God, so here he means that it cannot hurt the friends. It is unnecessary, with Duhm, to make the verse a question.

**5.** The marg. translates as a question, 'Will ye indeed magnify yourselves against me, And plead against me my reproach?' This is adopted by several of the best authorities, and follows very well on verse 4. According to the R. V. the sentence begun in this verse is completed in verse 6. If you cast my calamity in my teeth, and assume airs of superiority on the basis of it, then let me tell you that it is due to no fault of mine, but God alone is to blame. We might also translate, 'If indeed ye will magnify yourselves against me, then prove against me my reproach;' if you adopt this attitude, you ought to justify it by sound arguments!

**6.** It is God who by the disasters He has brought on him has put him in the wrong. And with reference to Bildad's statement that the wicked 'is cast into a net by his own feet,' he replies that his own evil walk had not snared him in his present misery, but God had cast the toils around him.

**subverted me:** to be preferred to the marg. 'overthrown me.'

**7.** If he appeals for justice God refuses to listen and right him; cf. Lam. iii. 8.

**cry out of wrong.** Better, 'cry out, Violence!' cf. Jer. xx. 8; Hab. i. 2.

**8.** All way of escape is cut off, for God has built a wall athwart his path. Cf. Lam. iii. 7, 9; Hos. ii. 6. Job had expressed himself similarly iii. 23, xiii. 27, xiv. 5. Another metaphor illustrates his state, darkness has gathered about him so dense that he is utterly bewildered and cannot see a step of his way.

He hath stripped me of my glory, 9
And taken the crown from my head.
He hath broken me down on every side, and I am gone: 10
And mine hope hath he plucked up like a tree.
He hath also kindled his wrath against me, 11
And he counteth me unto him as *one of* his adversaries.
His troops come on together, and cast up their way 12
against me,
And encamp round about my tent.
He hath put my brethren far from me, 13
And mine acquaintance are wholly estranged from me.
My kinsfolk have failed, 14
And my familiar friends have forgotten me.
They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count me 15
for a stranger:

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**9.** The crown is all that gave him honour in the eyes of men, his wealth and high standing in society, but especially his righteousness; cf. 'my justice was as a robe and a diadem,' xxix. 14; Lam. v. 16.

**10.** God breaks him down like a building, so that he has to go. His hope of happiness God has extirpated, as a tree is plucked up by the roots.

**11.** The metaphor changes to a military one, as in x. 17, xvi. 12-14.

**12. cast up their way:** throw up a rampart, from which to attack the fortress. The mention of the tent in this context is not quite what would have been expected.

**13.** The next sign of God's hostility that he mentions is abandonment by his friends, his relatives, and those of his own household. Many scholars, however, follow the LXX, and in the first line read, 'My brethren are gone far from me.'

**14. familiar friends:** they that know me. Some connect this word with the preceding line, and then complete the second line with the first two words of verse 15 translated 'They that dwell in mine house.' If we adopt this course, which produces lines of more normal length (they are too short in this verse, and the first line of verse 15 is too long), it would be best to read, with Duhm, 'My kinsfolk have ceased to know me,' which involves the omission of one consonant (*middē'i* for *m$^e$yuddā'i*). This gives an excellent parallel to the next line.

**15. They that dwell in mine house.** Frequently explained

I am an alien in their sight.
16 I call unto my servant, and he giveth me no answer,
*Though* I entreat him with my mouth.
17 My breath is strange to my wife,
And my supplication to the children of my *mother's* womb.

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as including slaves and hired labourers. But the words properly mean 'the sojourners in mine house,' and may better refer to guests who occasionally stayed with Job. Connecting with verse 14, we may translate, 'And my guests have forgotten me.' The next couplet then runs **my maids count me for a stranger, I am an alien in their sight.**

**16.** Whether any definite slave is intended, the house-steward, or Job's personal attendant, is not clear. We might translate the second line, 'I have to entreat him with my mouth.' He must humiliate himself by entreaty, since the servant, once so obsequious, pays no heed to his command.

**17. strange** is explained as 'offensive,' but perhaps it is not the verb 'to be strange' that is used here, but as the Oxf. Heb. Lexicon, followed by Budde, takes it, another verb meaning 'to be loathsome,' cognate to an Arabic word with the same meaning.

**my supplication:** marg. 'I make supplication' or 'I am loathsome.' The parallelism is decisive for the latter; though here again appeal must be made to an Arabic verb. The translation 'I make supplication' takes the word as the Qal conjugation of a verb, which has just before (verse 16) been used in the Hithpael (reflexive). There is no other case, however, of the Qal being used in this sense. Moreover, the occurrence of the Hithpael just before makes it possible that here the original text has been accidentally altered. In any case the ill-odour exhaled by reason of his disease is intended.

**of my** mother's **womb:** marg. 'of my body.' The literal sense is 'of my womb.' For the expression used of a man see Mic. vi. 7 ('fruit of my womb'); Ps. cxxxii. 11 ('fruit of thy womb'). In both of these cases the R. V. translates 'body' as the marg. here. Deut. vii. 13, xxviii. 4 are not so clear. According to the Prologue, and references in the poem (viii. 4, xxix. 5), Job's children are all dead. If we translate as in the margin we must suppose they are children of Job's concubines; but ch. xxxi leaves the impression that he was not a polygamist, while the reference to his wife just before is an objection to the view that here he is speaking of the children of concubines; or we must suppose that the poet has forgotten the fate of the children, which

Even young children despise me ; 18
If I arise, they speak against me.
All my inward friends abhor me : 19
And they whom I loved are turned against me.
My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, 20
And I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.

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is very improbable, or we must suppose that grand-children are meant, which is most unlikely, for it unduly strains the language, and ch. i, while it does not explicitly exclude this possibility, yet virtually does so ; it is surely assumed that Job's sons, while living in houses of their own, were not married. We may then set aside the translation 'of my body.' The translation in the text is also difficult. The words do not naturally bear the meaning put upon them. Moreover, Job has already mentioned his brothers in verse 13, though the term there used may have a less restricted meaning. A third suggestion is that the word translated 'womb,' like the cognate Arabic word, means here 'clan.' The phrase would then mean, 'the members of my clan.' This seems open to the objection that the verse in general, and the mention of his wife in particular, shows that Job is speaking of those who would naturally be in closer contact with him than the members of his clan. On this ground we should perhaps accept the R. V. and suppose the reference to be to his uterine brothers.

**18.** Cf. xxx. 1, 8–10. The very children laugh at the grotesque figure he cuts when he tries to get up and hobble about. Once the young had modestly retired from his presence, the old had risen to welcome him, and princes had been silent before him (xxix. 8–10, 21–25).

**19. inward friends :** *lit.* 'the men of my council,' i. e. his close friends, with whom he shared intimate, confidential relations.

**20.** This is a difficult and much debated verse. The first line seems to mean that he is worn to a skeleton. The most natural expression would be 'my skin hangs on my bones.' The reference to 'flesh' here seems out of place. It should probably be eliminated from the first line, and we should translate, 'my bone cleaves to my skin.' Some follow the LXX and read, 'my flesh is rotten in my skin,' but why add 'in my skin'? The second line has become a familiar proverb, but it is very difficult to know what is meant by the skin of the teeth. That it is a term for the gums, reduced to skin, and that the sense is, my gums alone remain untouched, might seem credible, if we were not reading the work of a great poet. If the text is sound the general meaning is probably that he has barely escaped, that he has escaped with the

21 Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends;
For the hand of God hath touched me.
22 Why do ye persecute me as God,
And are not satisfied with my flesh?
23 Oh that my words were now written!

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loss of everything. But the precise sense is uncertain, possibly, since the teeth have no skin, the skin of the teeth is equivalent to nothing at all. The text is suspicious, since **skin** occurs twice in the verse. We have already seen that 'flesh' should be removed from the first line. It is therefore a plausible suggestion, adopted by several scholars, that it should be substituted for 'skin' in the second line, and that we should read, 'And I am escaped with my flesh in my teeth.' This is what we have already had in xiii. 14, 'I will take my flesh in my teeth' (see note).

**21.** Utterly broken by the sad recital of his woes, and feeling that God is his relentless enemy, the cause of all his misery, he turns to the friends to implore their compassion. It is with great art that the poet has introduced this fine transition. In itself the appeal is moving, but still more when we see the proud man, who has lashed his friends with scorn and anger, reduced to become a suppliant for their pity. An appeal all the more hopeless that the reason he urges is the very reason why the friends will not respond. How should God's sycophants succour him whom God has smitten? But the supreme art of the poet in placing it here lies in this, that it greatly heightens the effect of the wonderful passage that is to follow. From God he turns to man in his desperation, but man fails him, and in a burst of sublime confidence he returns from man to God.

**touched,** rather 'smitten.' This perhaps supports the view that Job's disease was elephantiasis, since leprosy was in a special sense regarded as a stroke of God. We may compare the description of the suffering Servant of Yahweh in Isa. liii. 4-9.

**22.** The friends follow Job with their animosity as relentlessly as God, and they seem as if they cannot slander him enough. To eat the flesh of any one is an Aramaic and Arabic expression for slandering him.

**23.** From his unpitying friends Job turns for vindication to posterity. They despise his tears and refuse to believe his solemn affirmation of innocence. From the cruel unbelief of the present he appeals to the verdict of history. If only his words could be written for later generations to read, to them he might trust his honour. They would read them, unblinded by the smoke of controversy, their passion uninflamed by its heat, and

Oh that they were inscribed in a book!
That with an iron pen and lead 24
They were graven in the rock for ever!

judge him truly. In view of the great declaration that is to follow in verses 25–27 the reader is naturally tempted to think that it is this which Job wishes to have written. But in that case verse 25 would hardly begin with a connective particle, linking it to its present context. Moreover, it is a fine thought that Job should be driven from the present to seek refuge in the future, before he finds his refuge in God.

**inscribed in a book:** Duhm divides the consonants differently, to the improvement of the style, and gets the sense 'inscribed in his book.' He thinks that with such overpowering anxiety to have his words written, Job could have written them down himself. Accordingly he takes the wish to be that they should be inscribed in God's book. We should then have the same schism in God implied as we have already met, though expressing itself in a different way. Since, however, God's book is inaccessible to men, he wishes (verse 24) that for them his words might be engraved in the everlasting rock. But the usual view that Job first wishes his words to be written in a book, and then, conscious how soon a book might perish, corrects himself and utters the desire that they might be graven for ever in the rock, seems more satisfactory. The natural impression is that Job has in the two verses the same object in view, and that they do not deal with a writing in heaven and also one on earth. Moreover, it rather spoils the impression of verses 25–27 if already in verse 23 Job expresses the wish for God to take action. It is trying Job's language by inappropriate canons to raise any difficulty about his desire to have his words written in a book. As the thought surges up within him, he utters it, not thinking to pass on himself the criticism, 'Well, why don't I write them myself?'

**24.** Possibly Job may refer to two kinds of writing, an inscription made with an iron stylus on a leaden tablet, and an inscription in the rock. The former were well-known to antiquity. This sense would be better expressed if the text were slightly altered. Perhaps the other view is to be preferred, that only one inscription is intended: he asks that his words should be cut in the rock with an iron stylus and then that molten lead should be poured into the characters to make them more legible and to preserve them from the ravages of wind and rain, so that for all time men might read his declaration of innocence. There is no evidence, however, that this practice was followed in antiquity.

25 But I know that my redeemer liveth,

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xix. 25-27. But this record in the rocks is impracticable. Is he then never to be vindicated, in the present or the future? In a sudden burst of faith he utters the great conviction enshrined in these verses. Already he had expressed the remarkable assurance that his witness was in heaven, and He that vouched for him was on high. To this he returns. My friends fail me, the future will not right me, but I know that my Vindicator lives. He achieves in this passage a loftier flight than he has attained before. Unfortunately the interpretation, especially of verse 26, is much disputed, and the reference to Christ and the resurrection, which has obtained such wide currency in the Christian Church, has diffused very erroneous views of the passage. The general meaning is as follows: 'I know that my Vindicator even now lives, and after I am dead will rise up to attest my righteousness, and though my body is destroyed, yet I shall see God acting thus for me.' Some, however, and Budde and Kautzsch most recently, hold that there is no reference to any appearance of God after Job is dead, but that his vindication is to take place before his death. The language can be accommodated to this explanation, for the Hebrew is ambiguous, and this is what actually happens in the sequel. On the other hand the language favours the other view; moreover Job, in the parallel passage xvi. 18, 19, definitely contemplates vindication after death, 'Earth cover not my blood.' Budde argues that Job has most decisively set this hope aside in xiv. 14 ff. But had he done so there, this would not prove that he could not, in such a moment of exaltation, have passed from despair to hope. And there is nothing at all to prove that Job had moved from his earlier position. Sheol still remains the gloomy under-world, Job says nothing of escape from it. All that he says is that God will vindicate him, and he will see God in spite of his death. The hope of immortality is not expressed here, but only of a momentary vision of God, assuring him of his vindication. Even the thought of this overwhelms him.

**25. But I know.** The marg. renders 'For' instead of 'But.' In that case Job would be giving a reason for what has just preceded. Apparently this would involve our regarding the words that he wishes to have written as those in verses 25-27, a view that we have already set aside. The translation 'But' is much better; from the vain wishes of earth he soars to the radiant certainty of God. The pronoun in the Hebrew is emphatic. Men may doubt my integrity, but for my part I know without any misgivings that God will establish it.

**my redeemer liveth.** The word translated 'redeemer' is *gō'ēl*. The human *gō'ēl* was the next of kin, who had various duties to perform, imposed by his relationship, such as to redeem from

And that he shall stand up at the last upon the earth:
And after my skin hath been thus destroyed, 26

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bondage, or debt, and especially to avenge his kinsman's blood. Here, accordingly, several interpret the term to mean 'avenger of blood.' In favour of this view is the appeal to earth not to stifle the cry of his blood for vengeance (xvi. 18). On the other hand this passage says nothing of Job's unjust death, so that the suggestion of this sense is not given by the present context. Yahweh is also so often spoken of as the deliverer of Israel by the Second Isaiah, probably also in Ps. xxii. 8 (read with Halévy, His *gō'ēl* is Yahweh), that here also we should probably adopt a similar sense. Only we must not translate 'deliverer' or 'redeemer,' which would imply a more advanced doctrine of the future life than we find in Job, such a doctrine as we find in Pss. xvi, xvii, xlix and lxxiii. The marg. 'vindicator' is the sense required; it is not redemption from Sheol, but the clearing of his fame, to which Job looks forward. When further he says of his vindicator that he 'lives,' he hints the contrast with his own condition; he dies, but his vindicator is the living one. And life is not mere existence; the living God is the God who acts and thus manifests His life.

**at the last.** The word is probably adjectival rather than adverbial, meaning 'as one who comes after' or 'as one who comes at the end.' The meaning may be 'as one who comes in at the end of the dispute,' or 'one who comes as my successor when I am dead,' or possibly 'the Last' (as God is called 'the First and the Last,' Isa. xliv. 6, xlviii. 12). If the view is correct that Job contemplates vindication only after his death, then the translation 'as a successor' should probably be preferred. Siegfried reads 'my successor.' **Stand up** is literally 'arise.' The term is used of one who intervenes in a lawsuit as witness or judge.

**upon the earth:** the literal translation is 'upon the dust,' and we should in all probability adopt that rendering here, and explain it to mean, upon my grave. Bickell, Siegfried, and Klostermann read 'upon my dust.' The translation 'upon the earth' is dubious, though the phrase occurs in that sense in xli. 33. We can hardly, however, decide against it on the ground that it would be taken for granted, inasmuch as God might speak from heaven or upon earth. The rendering 'against the dust,' i. e. against the friends who are made of dust (iv. 19), is unlikely.

**26.** The verse is very difficult. The marg. gives two main alternatives, and, whichever of the three renderings be adopted, 'from' may be translated 'without.' The two marginal renderings are (*a*) 'And after my skin hath been destroyed, this *shall be*, Yet from my flesh shall I see God:

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even from my flesh shall I see God,' and (*b*) 'And *though* after my skin this *body* be destroyed, yet from my flesh shall I see God.' The literal translation of the first line is, 'And after my skin, they have destroyed, this.' The explanations are numerous. 'After' is apparently a preposition, so that 'after my skin' means, after its loss. The next clause may be taken as relative, the relative pronoun being, as often, omitted, 'which they have destroyed.' The third person plural active is frequently used in Hebrew when we should use a passive, so that we could render 'which has been destroyed.' 'This' may mean 'this skin of mine,' Job illustrating his words by a gesture pointing to his diseased skin. Or we might translate, 'And after my skin, this has been destroyed,' explaining as in the marg. (*b*), after my skin has been destroyed, this [i. e. my body] be destroyed as well. The marg. (*a*), which takes 'this' to mean 'this shall happen,' is also possible. If the text is correct, we should probably accept the first explanation, 'after the loss of this my skin, which has been destroyed.' The second line may bear quite opposite meanings. The word translated 'from' may mean 'without' or it may mean 'in,' since 'from' may mean 'away from,' or 'from the standpoint of.' If the general view of the passage that Job refers to an experience after death be correct, the translation 'without' must be adopted, and that not in the sense that he is reduced to a mere skeleton, all his flesh having been eaten away by his disease, but that he has died and become a disembodied spirit. The text of the verse is suspected by several scholars, and numerous emendations have been proposed. Ley makes a trifling change in the word translated 'my skin,' and ingeniously suggests that the word translated above 'they have destroyed' was originally a marginal gloss, indicating a lacuna in the text, caused by the rubbing out of the letters, and subsequently the word 'they are obliterated' [i. e. the letters] was taken into the text by mistake. The original sense he supposes may have been 'After I have ceased to be I shall know this.' Duhm emends the text by a new division of the consonants and very slight changes. He connects the last word of verse 25, 'shall arise,' with this verse. Thus he gets the sense 'And another shall arise as my witness, and shall set up his sign, Without my flesh shall I see God.' Siegfried takes 'the whole passage as a later gloss in which the resurrection of the just is regarded as a possibility (cf. Dan. xii. 13; 2 Macc. vii. 9, 11), contrary to the opinion put forth in the Book of Job with regard to Sheol' (ch. 3, &c). He also corrects the text and gains the sense that Job's *gō'ēl* will arise on his grave to defend him

Whom I shall see for myself, 27
And mine eyes shall behold, and not another.
My reins are consumed within me.

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will reanimate his body that had been destroyed by leprosy, and thus establish his righteousness. Probably, however, the passage does not contemplate a resurrection, and if the very difficult text has to be corrected, Duhm suggests a much better way of doing it.

**shall I see God:** here Job advances to a new conviction. He had previously asserted that his witness was in heaven, and looked forward to vindication by Him after his death. Now he expresses his confidence not only that his vindicator will act for him, but that he shall be permitted to see Him. His character will be cleared, but he will also know that it is cleared.

**27. for myself:** marg. 'on my side'; either translation gives a good sense. The stress laid in the passage on Job's seeing of God perhaps favours the former; three times Job asserts it, once with the pronoun emphatically introduced, 'I, yes I, shall see,' and in the next clause 'my eyes.' Job accumulates various forms of language to insist that he himself with his own eyes will see God. That he would see Him on His side did not need to be said, since God was to appear as his vindicator. What overwhelms him is the thought of his vision of God. It is no hearing of God by the hearing of the ear, no sight of God at second hand, but face to face he for himself will see God.

**and not another:** marg. 'and not *as* a stranger.' The words are ambiguous. Job may mean that he and no other will see God, or that he will see God and not another; the word translated 'another' means stranger, so that we might also translate 'mine eyes and not a stranger shall behold,' or as in the marg. 'mine eyes shall behold, and not *as* a stranger.' In favour of the former view is the fact that it makes Job's emphatic assertion that he himself shall see God more emphatic still. On the other hand the phrase 'mine eyes and not a stranger' is rather awkward. Besides, the vindication of Job is not communicated to himself alone, God must confess him before men. And the rival translation surely yields the finer sense. At present Job feels that his old familiar friend is estranged from him, but when this blessed vision breaks on his eyes, it will not be the God of the present who will appear to him, but the God who for so long had been his dear and intimate friend.

**My reins are consumed within me.** It is not clear whether Job means that he faints with longing, or that the thought of this vision of God overwhelms him. Probably the latter, for he does not expect the vindication till after his death. Orientals swoon

28 If ye say, How we will persecute him!
Seeing that the root of the matter is found in me;
29 Be ye afraid of the sword:
For wrath *bringeth* the punishments of the sword,
That ye may know there is a judgement.

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from emotion much more readily than Westerns. The reader may recall several instances in *The Arabian Nights.* The 'reins' or kidneys are often mentioned in the O. T. as the seat of intense emotion. Klostermann points differently and gets the sense 'I am utterly consumed.'

**28.** The last two verses bring us back from heaven to earth. They are also difficult and probably corrupt. Job threatens the friends if they persist in their persecution of him. According to the present text of verse 28 the R. V. translation gives the probable sense, and we must explain **the root of the matter** to be an expression for sincerity. But it is more likely that, with several scholars, we should read with 'many ancient authorities' 'in him' instead of **in me,** and take the word translated **is found** as a first pers. plur. active. We thus get the sense 'If ye say, How we will persecute him And find the root of the matter in him.' The 'root of the matter' is in that case the cause of Job's suffering. They propose to push their scrutiny into Job's case till they detect the hidden mischief that lurks within him.

**29.** Their persecution of Job will bring punishment upon them. Ley, on the basis of the LXX, reads 'falsehood' instead of 'sword' in the first line. The second line is generally regarded as corrupt, and a large number of emendations have been put forward. The simplest would be that proposed by Gesenius, slightly to alter one letter and read 'these' for **wrath,** 'for these are sins deserving the sword,' but it is hardly satisfactory. Dillmann suggests 'for the sword avenges transgressions.' Duhm, 'for wrath will destroy the reprobate.' No certainty is attainable. The LXX reads 'for wrath will come upon the lawless.' The third line is also questionable, the text being improbable. We might read 'That ye may know the Almighty,' or 'That ye may know that there is a judge.'

It is not quite easy to see why the poet should have suffered Job to reach the conviction attained in xix. 25–27 so early in the debate, especially as it seems to exercise so slight an influence on his later speeches. It would not be wholly satisfactory to say that up to this point Job's question has been his personal relation to God, and now that has been settled it will henceforth be the problem of God's government of the world. For while the personal relation has hitherto been Job's main concern, yet Job has

Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said, 20
Therefore do my thoughts give answer to me, 2
Even by reason of my haste that is in me.
I have heard the reproof which putteth me to shame, 3
And the spirit of my understanding answereth me.

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dealt already with the general problem, and that not merely incidentally, but at some length in ch. xii. And on the other hand, while Job discusses more fully the larger issues in the chapters that follow, he also returns to his own relations to God in chs. xxiii, xxix-xxxi. Still, it is true that the centre of gravity does shift somewhat, and the thought of God's misgovernment of the world may well have had a depressing influence on his personal relation to Him.

xx. 1-3. Zophar is moved to swift reply.

xx. 4-29. Does not Job know how brief is the joy of the wicked, how certain his doom, how utter the loss of his ill-gotten wealth, how terrible his destruction.

xx. **2.** Zophar begins an impetuous harangue, for he has been deeply irritated by Job's words. The references in Job's speech which have so provoked him are probably xix. 2, 3, 22, 28, 29.

**Therefore do my thoughts give answer to me.** The LXX, followed by several scholars, reads 'Not so (*lō' kēn* for *lākēn*) do my thoughts answer me.' The idea of a colloquy between Zophar and his thoughts is rather artificial; Duhm reads 'stir me up.'

**Even by reason of my haste that is in me:** the marg. renders, 'And by reason of *this* my haste is within me.' Probably this is the sense, though it is questionable whether it does not involve a slight change in the Hebrew.

**3.** The reason why he breaks into such vehement speech.

**And the spirit of my understanding answereth me:** marg. 'But out of my understanding *my* spirit answereth me'; neither translation yields a good sense. The word translated **spirit** means also 'wind.' Some accordingly translate 'wind [arising] from my understanding answers me.' In that case the preposition (*min*, 'out of,' 'from') expresses origin, Zophar's understanding calls forth 'wind' from Job. In favour of the sense 'wind' is the fact that elsewhere Bildad (viii. 2) and Eliphaz (xv. 2) begin their speeches by stigmatizing Job's words as wind. The preposition may also mean 'without' (as in xix. 26, 'without my flesh'), and Duhm, on the basis of the LXX, with a slight alteration of the Hebrew, gets the much more satisfactory sense, 'And with wind void of understanding thou answerest me.' Ley reads 'And with his windy understanding he answers me.' Marshall prefers

4 Knowest thou *not* this of old time,
Since man was placed upon earth,
5 That the triumphing of the wicked is short,
And the joy of the godless but for a moment?
6 Though his excellency mount up to the heavens,
And his head reach unto the clouds;
7 Yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung:
They which have seen him shall say, Where is he?
8 He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found:
Yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.
9 The eye which saw him shall see him no more;
Neither shall his place any more behold him.
10 His children shall seek the favour of the poor,
And his hands shall give back his wealth.

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to take the preposition as comparative, 'windy speech beyond my comprehension answereth me.'

**4.** The natural translation of the Hebrew is, **Knowest thou this of old?** In that case the question is a mocking one, Have you this fine windy knowledge (verse 3) from the time of creation? like the mockery of Eliphaz xv. 7, 8 and of God xxxviii. 21. The R.V. inserts *not*, and the reference in 'this' is to what follows, the short-lived joy of the wicked. Perhaps we should correct the text and substitute 'not' for 'this' in the Hebrew. For the second line cf. Deut. iv. 32.

**7.** It is unnecessary to eliminate by mistranslation or emendation the vigorous coarseness, so characteristic of the speaker. There need be no reference to the custom alluded to in Ezek. iv. 15, though this kind of fuel is still in common use.

**8.** Cf. Ps. lxxiii. 20, which in its original form probably ran 'As a dream after waking shall they be, When thou art aroused, thou shalt despise their semblance.' (See the writer's *Problem of Suffering in the O. T.*, p. 115.)

**9.** The verse is absent in the LXX, and is struck out by Bickell and Duhm. The second line is very like vii. 10, the first line recalls vii. 8 and repeats the thought of the second line of verse 7; cf. viii. 18. The eye is hardly the eye of God.

**10.** The first line seems to mean that the orphans of the rich oppressor will be reduced to such straits that they will even have

His bones are full of his youth, 11
But it shall lie down with him in the dust.
Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, 12
Though he hide it under his tongue;
Though he spare it, and will not let it go, 13
But keep it still within his mouth;
Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, 14
It is the gall of asps within him.
He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them 15
up again:

---

to court the poor, who, poor though they may be, are less destitute than themselves. The marg. says '*Or, as otherwise read*, The poor shall oppress his children.' This seems scarcely so good. The second line is rather surprising, since unless we suppose that 'his hands' can mean his hand by the agency of his children, an utterly improbable sense, we must assume that the first line of the verse refers to the time after his death, while this springs back to his lifetime. This is unlikely in two parallel lines. It is true that verse 11 refers to the evil-doer in his lifetime, but the previous description has come to an end, and with verse 11 a new beginning is made (hence there is no need, with Duhm, to strike out verse 10). Budde makes the excellent suggestion that for 'his hands' we should read 'his children,' inserting a single consonant; we thus get a parallel to 'his sons' (R.V. 'children') in the first line. The riches he has fraudulently amassed are given back by his children.

**11.** While his bones are full of vigour he is cut off. 'It' is 'his youth,' which is buried with him in his grave. The A. V. translated 'His bones are full *of the sin* of his youth,' and this view has had a wide currency. The meaning would be that his bones were rotten by reason of his debauchery. But this is not the true rendering.

**12.** Sin is described as a dainty tit-bit, which the sinner will not swallow, but keeps turning round and round in his mouth to let the whole expanse of his organ of taste enjoy its delicious sweetness. A chapter in *Pelham* is a good commentary.

**14.** Exquisite though its taste may be, the food turns to poison when swallowed; cf. Rev. x. 9, 10; Prov. xxiii. 32.

**15.** A new metaphor suggested by the preceding. He must disgorge the gains he has so greedily gulped down. The figure of God administering the emetic is coarse and powerful, as befits Zophar, cf. the description of Babylon being compelled to release

God shall cast them out of his belly.
16 He shall suck the poison of asps:
The viper's tongue shall slay him.
17 He shall not look upon the rivers,
The flowing streams of honey and butter.
18 That which he laboured for shall he restore, and shall not swallow it down;
According to the substance that he hath gotten, he shall not rejoice.

---

Israel: 'I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up' (Jer. li. 44, cf. 34). The LXX, shocked at Zophar's language, substituted 'an angel' for 'God.'

**16.** Budde thinks the verse is probably a gloss on verse 14, wrongly introduced into the text. It would follow better on verse 14. It is not clear what the first line means. If the sense is determined by verse 14, it will mean that the food he sucks in will prove to be the poison of asps. On the other hand, the parallelism suggests that he is stung by asps, whose poison his body drinks in through the wounds. 'Tongue' should not be urged to prove the verse a gloss, as if the poet himself must have written as a naturalist. The darting tongue may well have seemed the seat of the poison.

**17.** The text can hardly be right. 'Flowing streams' is literally 'streams of, brooks of,' we thus have three words for streams. As the two latter (*nahărē, naḥălē*) are very much alike, it is a plausible suggestion that we should strike out the former and read 'brooks of honey and butter.' Since, however, we have no parallel in the first line to 'honey and butter' in the second, the question arises whether the word 'streams of' may not really be an assimilation to the following word from such an original parallel. Klostermann very cleverly suggests that we should correct it into *yitshār* 'oil,' 'he shall not look upon rivers of oil, streams of honey and butter.' This is better than Duhm's ingenious reconstruction 'He shall not feed on the milk of the meadows, On valleys of honey and butter,' which has, however, support from the LXX. The word translated 'brooks' may also mean 'valleys.'

**18.** He cannot keep his ill-gotten gains, and will have no joy corresponding to his acquisitions. The text is dubious. The second line is long, and the expression 'according to the wealth of his exchange he shall not rejoice' (so literally) is curious. The word translated 'shall swallow it down' is very like the

For he hath oppressed and forsaken the poor ; 19
He hath violently taken away an house, and he shall not
build it up.
Because he knew no quietness within him, 20
He shall not save aught of that wherein he delighteth.
There was nothing left that he devoured not ; 21
Therefore his prosperity shall not endure.
In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits : 22
The hand of every one that is in misery shall come upon
him.
When he is about to fill his belly, 23
*God* shall cast the fierceness of his wrath upon him,

---

word translated 'be of good cheer' in ix. 27, and 'take comfort' in x. 20. If we read it here, with Duhm, we get a good parallel to 'rejoice' in the second line. He also omits the word 'according to the wealth of,' and with another slight change gets the sense 'He increases gain, and is not of good cheer, His exchange, and does not rejoice.'

**19.** He oppresses the poor and callously leaves them to their fate, so he shall not be established in the possession of that which he has seized. The margin reads 'which he builded not.'

**20. within him:** marg. 'in his greed,' Heb. 'in his belly.' His craving for wealth was never sated, so he shall lose everything. Several translate the second line 'He shall not escape with that wherein he delighteth.' The LXX reads 'His safety is not in his possessions,' and this is preferred by some, and yields a better parallelism. Duhm reads 'He has no rest with his treasure.'

**22.** Destitution overtakes him in the midst of his luxury. Perhaps, altering one point, we should read 'misery' for 'one that is in misery,' 'every power of misery comes upon him.' So LXX and Vulgate, followed by several scholars.

**23.** A difficult verse. If the text is right, the margin should perhaps be preferred : 'Let it be for the filling of his belly that *God* shall cast the fierceness of His wrath upon him.' Apart from the fact that the verse has three lines, the Hebrew is surprising, and some strike out this line. G. H. B. Wright, followed by Budde and Marshall, reads 'Yahweh' for 'it shall be' (*y<sup>e</sup>hī*). This is an easy emendation, but Yahweh is avoided by the poet in the dialogue.

And shall rain it upon him while he is eating.
24 He shall flee from the iron weapon,
And the bow of brass shall strike him through.
25 He draweth it forth, and it cometh out of his body:
Yea, the glittering point cometh out of his gall;
Terrors are upon him.
26 All darkness is laid up for his treasures:

---

**while he is eating:** i.e. apparently the judgement comes on him while he is revelling. But it would be better to translate with the marg. 'as his food.' Just as God rained manna, the angels' food, on His people, so He will rain His fierce wrath to glut the hunger of the greedy. The word is strangely written, and several emendations have been proposed. The best is 'snares' as in Ps. xi. 6, 'On the wicked he shall rain snares' (so Merx, Siegfried, and Klostermann). The word 'upon him' would usually mean 'upon them.' The plural form may be used for the singular, or may be due to the similar termination of the next word. Duhm thinks the original text was 'And rains upon him his wrath,' and that a reader wrote on the margin the word 'flood' (*mabbūl*), the three consonants were mistakenly introduced into the text and produced the present reading. This is most ingenious, but hardly more.

**24.** The metaphor changes, warriors surround him; while he flees from one in 'iron armour' another pierces him with a shaft from his brass bow. Cf. Amos v. 19. Duhm strikes out this verse and the first two lines of verse 25, as breaking the connexion, but quite needlessly.

**25.** The wounded man draws out the arrow. **Body** should be 'back.' Usually it is thought that he is supposed to be struck in the back, and pierced right through the body, and then to draw out the arrow at the front. This is questionable; perhaps with some scholars we should adopt what seems to have been the LXX reading, 'and the missile cometh out of his back.' In that case he is hit in front and the arrow is sent with such force that it pierces the body through.

**Terrors are upon him:** omitted by the LXX. If the line connects with what goes before, the description reaches a powerful climax in the horrors that close in on the death-stricken man. If the poet kept strictly to his scheme of couplets, it should be parallel to the first line of verse 26.

**26.** Usually the first line is thought to mean that calamity is destined for his treasures. The translation 'treasures' is rather doubtful, literally the word means 'his hidden things,' and it is

A fire not blown *by man* shall devour him;
It shall consume that which is left in his tent.
The heavens shall reveal his iniquity, 27
And the earth shall rise up against him.
The increase of his house shall depart, 28
*His goods* shall flow away in the day of his wrath.

---

uncertain whether 'darkness' would be used for calamity in this connexion. The literal meaning of the line is, 'All darkness is concealed for his hidden things,' and there is force in Duhm's remark that this should mean that the darkness which sheltered his treasures is removed; cf. Isa. xlv. 3, 'I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places.' Since 'laid up' and 'treasures' are forms of verbs bearing the same sense, we should perhaps on the basis of the LXX read simply 'darkness is laid up for him,' eliminating the word translated 'his treasures' as a gloss.

**A fire not blown:** i.e. not kindled by man, but either 'the fire of God' as in i. 16, or one spontaneously arising, mysterious in its origin, needing no human breath to foster its feeble beginning. There is the further possibility that 'not blown' may indicate that it is not a literal fire, but the fire of disease, a fever. But this is not so fine.

**27.** Heaven and earth unite against him. Apparently there is an allusion to Job's assertion that his witness was in heaven, and his appeal to earth not to cover his blood. Since this verse seems to break the connexion between verses 26, 28, some seek to overcome this difficulty by emendation of verse 28. Budde transposes the two verses.

**28. depart:** the word is used often for going into exile, though some take it to be from a verb meaning to 'roll,' Dillmann from a verb meaning 'to reveal,' 'The increase of his house must be revealed as that which flows away,' &c. Duhm, following the LXX, reads 'Destruction sweeps away his house.'

*His goods* **shall flow away:** *lit.* 'things washed away.' The expression is rather abrupt, but it is vigorous and need not be altered. Duhm reads 'a curse in the day of his wrath.'

In this speech Zophar does little more than repeat the views already expounded by Eliphaz and Bildad in the second cycle of the debate, though the general theme that the wicked are doomed to destruction is handled by him with much freshness and power of expression, and a native coarseness absent from the speeches of his fellows. He lays stress on the brevity of the good fortune enjoyed by the wicked. Once more it may be questioned whether

29 This is the portion of a wicked man from God,
And the heritage appointed unto him by God.

**21** Then Job answered and said,
2 Hear diligently my speech;
And let this be your consolations.
3 Suffer me, and I also will speak;
And after that I have spoken, mock on.

---

we ought to see in his description, any more than in Bildad's, something specially designed to fit the case of Job. If he were really the type of man intended, the picture would serve as a warning; but if not, the speech was relevant in the debate as vindicating the Divine government that Job had impugned. Now that all three have stated this position, the poet lets Job pulverize it. Eliphaz had stated it, and Bildad had followed on his lines, but Job had been too absorbed in the question of his relations with God to reply.

xxi. 1-6. Job invites the close attention of the friends to the terrible truths he will bring before them.

xxi. 7-13. Why do the wicked live on to old age, become mighty, have many children, prosper and live happily, and die without lingering illness?

xxi. 14-22. Yet they deliberately renounced God, since His service was unprofitable. How often is it that they are visited with calamity? Let God inflict punishment on the wicked himself, not on his children, of whose suffering he would have no knowledge. How foolish to teach wisdom to God, who judges the angels.

xxi. 23-26. How different the lot of man, yet all die alike.

xxi. 27-34. Job understands their insinuations. But travellers tell how the wicked are spared in time of disaster, live without rebuke or retribution, rest peacefully in the tomb, and have innumerable imitators. How useless then for the friends to comfort him with their sophistries.

xxi. **2.** Eliphaz had dignified the smug doctrine he and his friends administered to Job by the name 'the consolations of God' (xv. 11), and Job had retorted 'Tormenting comforters are ye all' (xvi. 2). Now he asks for their silence while they listen to his indictment of the world's moral government; this will console him more than any of their lip-consolation.

**3. mock on:** marg. 'shalt thou mock.' The change from plur.

As for me, is my complaint to man? 4
And why should I not be impatient?
Mark me, and be astonished, 5
And lay your hand upon your mouth.
Even when I remember I am troubled, 6
And horror taketh hold on my flesh.
Wherefore do the wicked live, 7
Become old, yea, wax mighty in power?
Their seed is established with them in their sight, 8
And their offspring before their eyes.
Their houses are safe from fear, 9

---

to sing. is to single out Zophar, who could utter such a speech as his last in reply to Job's moving utterance in ch. xix. Several, however, follow the LXX in reading the plural. The LXX also reads a negative, but the sense that after they had heard what Job had to say they would feel in no mood to mock, though accepted by several recent scholars, seems less good than that yielded by the text.

**4. to man:** marg. 'of man.' The meaning seems to be 'against man.' Why should *you* be so vexed? I fly at higher game. The second line is literally 'and why should not my spirit be short?' cf. our 'short-tempered,' and the expression in vi. 11 'to prolong the soul,' i. e. to be patient.

**5. Mark me:** Heb. 'Look unto me.'

**6.** He at least, whatever the friends may feel, shudders when he thinks of God's immoral government of the world. He says 'even' because the mere thought fills him with horror, if so, how awful the spectacle of the world's misery, how unspeakable the misery itself!

**7.** Job is not seeking a dialectical triumph over the friends, for the question he puts to them is, as verse 6 shows, one that overpowers him with horror. He propounds to them the problem that torments himself: Why do the wicked prosper?

**8.** First, as befits one whose crowning loss was that of all his children, the bereaved man places the fact that the wicked have their children all about them to the end. Since in the next two verses he refers to his cattle and then in verse 11 again to his children, some think the order has been dislocated. If so, since verse 11 cannot be separated from verse 12, we should have to place this verse immediately before it. This, however, is unnecessary.

Neither is the rod of God upon them.
10 Their bull gendereth, and faileth not;
Their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.
11 They send forth their little ones like a flock,
And their children dance.
12 They sing to the timbrel and harp,
And rejoice at the sound of the pipe.
13 They spend their days in prosperity,
And in a moment they go down to Sheol.
14 Yet they said unto God, Depart from us;
For we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.
15 What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?
And what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

---

**9. the rod of God:** which had so sorely smitten Job. For **safe from fear** the marg. gives 'in peace without fear.'

**11.** Cf. Ps. cvii. 41. His children are very numerous is the point of **like a flock.** It is curious that such a festive life Job's children also had lived; but they breathed an atmosphere of piety, guarded from guilt by their father's anxious care. They were cut off, but the children of the wicked live on in pleasure.

**12. They sing:** *lit.* 'they lift up,' i. e. the voice. The reference is to the wicked, not to their children.

**13. in a moment:** the swift death for which Job so vainly longs. Theirs is not an untimely death. They live the full measure of years (verse 7), in happiness to the last, and are spared death by the torture of a lingering illness. Several translate 'in peace.' The verb pointed in the text means 'they are scared,' but this, which would be suitable in Pss. xlix, lxxiii, is out of place here. An alteration of the points gives the sense 'go down.' Siegfried reads, in harmony with the LXX, 'And in the freedom of Sheol they rest'—much less vivid.

**14.** The irreligious, sceptical temper that here finds expression is several times referred to in the O. T. An early instance is Isa. v. 18, 19, and references to 'the scorners,' who utter this kind of language, are frequent in the prophetic literature, the Proverbs, and the Psalms. The description in Ps. lxxiii should be compared.

**15.** The wail of the pious in Malachi and of the author of Ps. lxxiii that the service of God is unprofitable is here urged as the reason for neglect of Him. Religion does not pay. 'Business is

Lo, their prosperity is not in their hand : 16
The counsel of the wicked is far from me.
How oft is it that the lamp of the wicked is put out ? 17
That their calamity cometh upon them ?
That *God* distributeth sorrows in his anger ?
That they are as stubble before the wind, 18
And as chaff that the storm carrieth away ?

---

business' is the maxim by which they regulate their relations with God. They get on just as well without God as with Him ; they are not such fools as to 'serve God for nought.' Cf. the higgling Jacob's vow, Gen. xxviii. 20-22.

**16.** If we translate the first line as in R. V. the meaning seems to be that they do not create their own prosperity, but God Himself confers it on them. God rewards their neglect by lavishing His bounty on them. Many, however, suppose that this is an objection from the friends anticipated by Job (marg. inserts *Ye say*), or perhaps actually uttered by Eliphaz, who repeats the second line in xxii. 18. In that case the meaning will be, Their fortune is not in their own, but in a higher hand, God will destroy it. Duhm reads as a question, and corrects the pronoun in the second line in accordance with the LXX, 'Is not their prosperity in their hand, The counsel of the wicked far from Him ?' i. e. they control their own destiny, God does not concern Himself with their plans. Budde omits the second line, which in its present form seems out of harmony with its context.

**17.** Cf. Prov. xiii. 9, xx. 20, xxiv. 20. Bildad had said 'The light of the wicked shall be put out' (xviii. 5), and 'calamity shall be ready for his halting' (12). Job replies that this but rarely happens, not that it never happens. But it is a mistake to emphasize this as the starting-point for further concessions to the traditional view. The marg. reads 'How oft is the lamp of the wicked put out, and *how oft* cometh their calamity upon them ! *God* distributeth sorrows in his anger. They are as stubble before the wind, And as chaff that the storm carrieth away.' This is clearly impossible as an expression of Job's sentiments, and can hardly be an anticipation of the argument of the friends or an interruption, since it comes immediately before such a statement (verse 19), and no reply is made to it.

**18.** Cf. Ps. i. 4 ; Isa. xvii. 13. Siegfried takes verses 16-18 as an interpolation designed to bring Job's speeches into conformity to the orthodox doctrine of retribution. But they may be explained in harmony with Job's point of view.

19 *Ye say*, God layeth up his iniquity for his children.
Let him recompense it unto himself, that he may know it.
20 Let his own eyes see his destruction,
And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.
21 For what pleasure hath he in his house after him,
When the number of his months is cut off in the midst?
22 Shall any teach God knowledge?
Seeing he judgeth those that are high.

---

**19.** Here again, according to the text, Job anticipates an objection the friends may make, or one of them interrupts him with it. If the latter, it may, as Moulton, followed by Marshall, suggests, be Bildad who speaks, though in viii. 4 he traces the death of Job's children to their own transgression. It was an old-established view that the sins of the fathers were visited on the children to the third and fourth generations, a view very emphatically repudiated by Ezekiel, and if text and translation are right here, by Job in answer to it. It is no punishment to the sinner that his children are punished after he is dead, for in Sheol he does not know how his dearest ones fare, but all his thin stream of consciousness is centred on himself (xiv. 21, 22). The marg. renders: 'God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know it. His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.' There can have been no reason for inserting it, except that it is the A.V. rendering. Ley and Duhm suggest another view. The word for 'God' is *'Eloah*, but naturally it should stand in a different place in the sentence. The similar word for 'God,' *'El*, would as otherwise pointed (*'al*) be a negative particle, and they think this stood originally in the text, which would then run 'Let him not lay up iniquity for his children.' This yields a very vigorous sense, and as the friends have not maintained, and were not likely to maintain, that the sinner escaped and his children suffered in his stead, it should probably be preferred. The usual view is supported by reference to v. 4 and xx. 10, but these verses do not maintain that the children suffer instead of the sinner, but that they suffer as well.

**21.** Cf. xiv. 21, 22; Eccles. ix. 5, 6. **pleasure:** here 'interest' would be better.

**22.** Here again some find an objection anticipated or made by the friends, perhaps Zophar, to the effect that Job is setting up to be wiser than God. But though they might have passed this criticism, and did in fact say similar things (iv. 17, 18, xv. 7, 8,

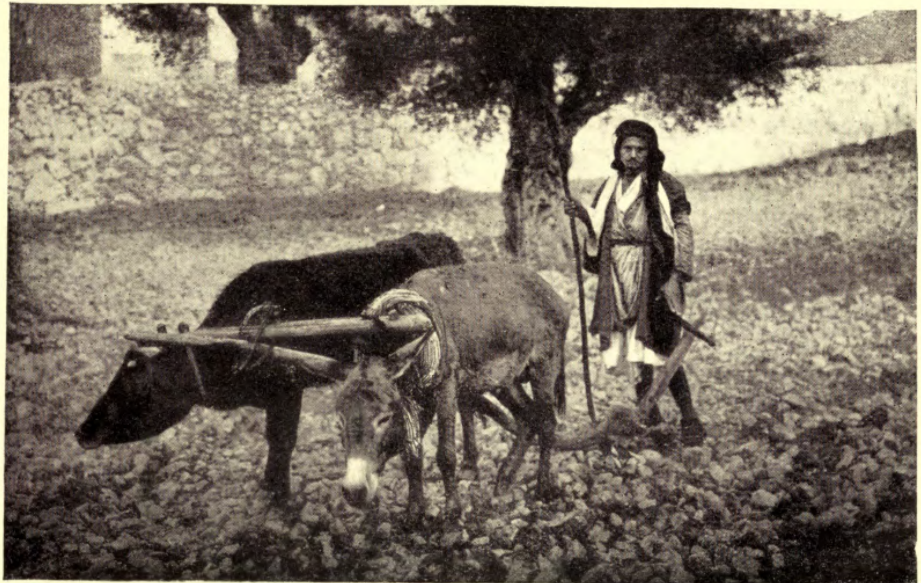

*Photo: Photochrom Co.*

PLOUGHING IN PALESTINE.

One dieth in his full strength, 23
Being wholly at ease and quiet:
His breasts are full of milk, 24
And the marrow of his bones is moistened.
And another dieth in bitterness of soul, 25
And never tasteth of good.
They lie down alike in the dust, 26
And the worm covereth them.
Behold, I know your thoughts, 27
And the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.
For ye say, Where is the house of the prince? 28
And where is the tent wherein the wicked dwelt?

---

15), there is no reason why they should say it at this point, moreover Job makes no reply. He means that the friends by their assertion of the harmonious adjustment of destiny to conduct, their 'all's blue' creed, were really pretending to be wiser than God, whose real stood in sharp contrast to their ideal. God judges the angels (cf. iv. 18, xv. 15, xxv. 2, 5; Pss. lviii, lxxxii; Isa. xxiv. 21–23), how foolish for men to misdescribe His judgement of the world. Why Job should not have said this, a reason some urge for altering the text, is unintelligible. It is very interesting to compare Paul's statement that the saints will judge the angels (1 Cor. vi. 3), and his inference that they ought to be able to settle the small squabbles of a Christian community.

**24. breasts:** the word occurs only here. The marg. 'milk pails' is to be preferred, in spite of the fact that the parallel line names a part of the body. The moistening of his marrow means that he is refreshed and strengthened.

**26.** It is noteworthy that here Job does not mechanically reverse the doctrine of the friends, and allot happiness to the evil and calamity to the good. 'He sees life steadily and sees it whole' in these few lines. Fate deals out its awards irrespective of moral criteria. It is the dissimilarity in the common human lot that moves him, rather than its ethical perversity.

**27.** It is usually thought that Job means that the lurid descriptions which the friends have given of the transgressor's fate were intended for him.

**28. prince:** i.e. the rich oppressor. His home has been destroyed. The second line is literally 'Where the tent of the dwellings of the wicked.' Probably 'the tent of' should be

29 Have ye not asked them that go by the way?
And do ye not know their tokens?
30 That the evil man is reserved to the day of calamity?
That they are led forth to the day of wrath?
31 Who shall declare his way to his face?
And who shall repay him what he hath done?
32 Yet shall he be borne to the grave,
And shall keep watch over the tomb.
33 The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him,

---

struck out as due to dittography of the preceding word, which is very similar.

**29.** Those who have travelled, and thus formed their conclusions on a large induction of data, contradict the view of the friends, and substantiate their assertions by their tokens, i. e. the instances that have fallen under their observation.

**30.** The translation gives a wholly unsuitable meaning, but is a more faithful rendering of the text than the marg. 'That the evil man is spared in the day of calamity? That they are led away in the day of wrath?' This, however, gives a good sense with slight alteration, and may be accepted, though several other expedients have been proposed.

**31.** refers to the wicked man, not, as some take it, to God.

**32.** The marg. renders 'Moreover' for 'Yet,' and present for the future tenses in this and the next verse. It also reads in the second line 'they shall keep watch,' taking the third person singular as an indefinite, 'one shall keep watch.' If the translation in the text is retained, the reference is to the effigy of the dead man that is placed over his tomb and is thought to watch it. Such a conception was quite natural to antiquity, which identified deities with their images, and even among modern peoples it is not an uncommon experience to feel that the portrait of a friend is watching one. If we translate as in the margin, the meaning is that precautions are taken against injury to the body; he is as guarded against mischief after death as in his life. Klostermann, however, by two trifling alterations gets the sense, 'And he shall be borne to the grave, he comes to rest as a shock of corn goeth up'; see v. 26, where the word here translated 'tomb' is used in the sense of 'a shock of corn.'

**33.** The description fitly closes with the idyllic touch of perfect peace in the bosom of the fragrant earth. A life so full of unbroken happiness, lived out to its full measure, rounded off by sleep so sweet and grateful, was bound to attract many imitators,

And all men shall draw after him,
As there were innumerable before him.
How then comfort ye me in vain, 34
Seeing in your answers there remaineth *only* falsehood?

---

who reversing Balaam's maxim might say 'Let me die the death of the wicked,' just as many had preceded him in his evil-doing. It would be possible to take the second line of the verse to mean that all men flock to his grave, but this would involve striking out the third line, as an addition by one who misinterpreted the second line of moral imitation. Cf. Eccl. iv. 15, 16.

**the valley:** the favourite position for graves.

**34. comfort ye me:** notice how the speech ends on the note with which it began. Cf. xvi. 2.

**falsehood:** marg. 'faithlessness.'

With this speech the second cycle of the debate closes. The friends, who in their first speeches had dwelt on the purity, the greatness, the wisdom of God, in this series have little to say except of the evil fate of the wicked, a thought on which Eliphaz and Bildad had also laid stress before. Thus they vindicate God's moral government of the world. Job does not concern himself with their assertions till his concluding speech, being absorbed through his earlier speeches in this cycle with his own sad fate and the groping after God. From his former pleading to God that He would shelter him in Sheol from His anger, and then recall him to the old fellowship of love, an aspiration that he sets aside as hopeless, he advances to the belief that he will not go unvindicated, but that his Witness is on high. Then he moves forward to the thought not only that God will stand on his grave as his Vindicator, but that he himself shall behold Him. Yet these flights of faith are not sustained, though Job's sense of God's alienation is henceforth less sharp than before. And while the personal problem weighs on him now more lightly, the general problem is not one whit relieved. We should have anticipated that, once Job has reached the conviction that God's animosity to him is but transient, he would apply this principle to the apparent immorality of God's rule. But in the last speech of this cycle, which is devoted to this topic, he affirms, in reply to the friends, his deliberate conviction that the wicked prosper. The distinction in God, which has mitigated the personal difficulty, does not emerge here. We may well ask the reason. It may be suggested that the poet meant to show us that Job felt the pressure of the personal problem much more keenly than that of the general, and also had more data for its solution. True, he speaks of himself as

**22** Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,
2 Can a man be profitable unto God?
Surely he that is wise is profitable unto himself.

horror-stricken when he thinks of God's unrighteous rule. Yet his need for a solution was felt with less urgency, since he himself was not involved. His own relation with God belonged to those things of which people say 'I must settle it or go mad.' The question of God's moral government looms up behind it, and is a question of far more radical significance, but it is more abstract, and does not touch him on the raw. Therefore he contents himself with stating it in its naked horror, but does not feel impelled to move towards a solution. Moreover, the conviction of God's misgovernment was derived from observation, while, to set against his present sense of God's hostility, he had a long experience of His goodness to him. Hence he had not the immediate consciousness to start from in the larger, which he had in the personal, problem.

xxii. 1-5. Eliphaz replies, since God has no interest in man's righteousness, and He cannot punish Job for his piety, it is plain that Job is a great sinner.

xxii. 6-11. He has been a remorseless creditor, has refused bread and water to the hungry and weary, oppressed the widow and orphan. Therefore he is now suffering from traps and terrors, his light is turned into darkness, the floods overwhelm him.

xxii. 12-20. God is at the pinnacle of heaven; Job thinks that He cannot see through the clouds the deeds of man. Yet the wicked of old time who renounced God perished, to the joy of the righteous.

xxii. 21-30. Let Job receive God's instruction through the speaker. If he returns humbly to God, puts away unrighteousness, casts away his gold and makes God his treasure, then he shall be restored to communion with Him, his life shall be prosperous, and even the guilty will be delivered in virtue of his innocence.

**2.** Eliphaz argues, since the Almighty has no interest or pleasure in a man's righteousness, He will be under no temptation to distort the truth about his real character, but will treat him in harmony with his actual conduct. Therefore Job's suffering must be due to sin. The argument is interesting. God is the cold, passionless ruler, who has no vital concern in man's conduct, and adjusts retribution to behaviour with the inhuman precision of a machine. To such an automaton pity and spite would be alike unknown. Moreover, He is far too great to be affected by

Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? 3
Or is it gain *to him*, that thou makest thy ways perfect?
Is it for thy fear *of him* that he reproveth thee, 4
That he entereth with thee into judgement?
Is not thy wickedness great? 5
Neither is there any end to thine iniquities.
For thou hast taken pledges of thy brother for nought, 6
And stripped the naked of their clothing.

---

the petty concerns of men. Job himself had argued from the latter premiss that God should not deign to notice man's sins, inasmuch as they could not injure Him (vii. 20). Eliphaz puts his point rather strangely. We should have expected rather, God gets no advantage from making you out to be a sinner, otherwise we could understand His afflicting an innocent man, and thus branding him as a criminal. Lies are told because the liar hopes to get something by them. If you are white God has no interest in painting you black, but if you are black you have the greatest inducement to paint yourself white. Your self-vindication cannot be trusted where the disinterested evidence against you is so damning. The principle taken for granted by Eliphaz is that suffering, such as Job endures, implies that God means by it to mark the sufferer as a sinner. This axiom was common to Job and the friends, but was, of course, incorrect.

**4. for thy fear** *of him*. This translation is much to be preferred to that in the margin 'for fear of thee,' though this would yield an appropriate sense in a context which speaks of God's self-interest as a possible motive for His action. The word is used several times by Eliphaz in the sense of piety, and this determines its meaning here. The thought expressed is that it is incredible that God should punish Job for his piety, the speaker therefore proceeds in the next verse on the ground of his suffering to assert his wickedness.

**5.** The description which now follows has its counterpart in Job's oath of innocence in ch. xxxi. The sins named are those to which the rich and powerful are specially prone, particularly in the East.

**6.** The second line explains the first. In his merciless avarice he has taken advantage of the desperate extremity of his clansmen, and in security for loans has deprived them of their under-garment. The word **naked** does not mean that they were absolutely naked, cf. Isa. xx. 3; but they were so poor that they possessed only the long tunic worn next the skin. Since this was all they had to protect themselves against the cold at night, the creditor was

7 Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink,
And thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.
8 [**M**] But as for the mighty man, he had the earth;
And the honourable man, he dwelt in it.
9 [**A**] Thou hast sent widows away empty,
And the arms of the fatherless have been broken.
10 Therefore snares are round about thee,
And sudden fear troubleth thee,
11 Or darkness, that thou canst not see,
And abundance of waters cover thee.

---

forbidden even in the oldest law (Exod. xxii. 26, 27) to keep it after sunset, 'for that is his only covering, it is his garment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep?' cf. the law in Deut. xxiv. 10-13, where we have also a tender delicacy for the debtor's sensitiveness not only to cold but to shame, cf. Deut. xxiv. 17. **for nought** seems to mean without cause: he was not driven to do it by his own necessity.

**7.** Cf. Isa. lviii. 7, 10; Matt. xxv. 42. He neglected Lazarus at his gate.

**8.** The meaning seems to be that Job had acted like the sinners denounced in Isa. v. 8, who to secure large estates for themselves ruthlessly evicted the defenceless proprietors of small holdings. **the mighty man** (*lit.* 'the man of arm') and **the honourable man** (*lit.* 'he whose person is accepted') seem both to mean Job, who is spoken of in the third person to make the words more exasperating, just as Isaiah diverges from the second to the third person, from passionate, excited address to crushing scorn, in his denunciation of Shebna (Isa. xxii. 16). It would be possible to distinguish between 'the mighty man' who possessed the land and 'the honourable man' or 'favourite' who dwelt in it, the latter being Job himself. Siegfried treats the verse as a gloss, and the same suggestion had occurred to the present writer. Budde favours it.

**11.** The verse is more usually translated as in the marg. 'Or dost thou not see the darkness, and the flood of waters that covereth thee?' and this is explained, Do you not comprehend the significance of your calamities. But this explanation forces a meaning into the question, which is quite pointless as it stands; Job was only too conscious of his troubles. We should follow the LXX and read instead of the first line, 'Thy light has become darkness.'

Is not God in the height of heaven? 12
And behold the height of the stars, how high they are!
And thou sayest, What doth God know? 13
Can he judge through the thick darkness?
Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not; 14
And he walketh in the circuit of heaven.
Wilt thou keep the old way 15
Which wicked men have trodden?
Who were snatched away before their time, 16
Whose foundation was poured out as a stream:
[M] Who said unto God, Depart from us; 17

---

**12.** The connexion with the following verses is not clear. This verse in itself seems to mean God is so lofty that He sees all things, since all lie beneath Him, before His gaze. Then the next verses would mean, How foolish then for you to say that His vision cannot penetrate through the clouds. But the connexion might be, Is not God exalted? Yes, too exalted, you say, to mark man's ways. Duhm thinks the verse is a gloss, derived from a poem on the exaltation of God.

**behold the height of the stars.** The topmost star will give you the measure how high God is. But it would be better to change the pointing and instead of 'behold' read 'he beholdeth.' The word translated 'height' is literally 'head.' The meaning seems to be the highest star; it might refer to a constellation, though we do not know of one that went by the name 'The head of the stars.' Budde's suggestion, that the word has arisen through dittography of the preceding word, is plausible.

**14. in the circuit:** better as in the marg. 'on the vault,' since it is a question of God's elevation above the world. Duhm thinks 'the circle of heaven' is the far horizon, where earth and heaven meet, inaccessible to man, and regarded as the home of physical marvels and of spirits and demons.

**15.** A glance at history would convince Job of his mistake. So the rebels of old time defied God and were swept away. The reference is either to the Flood story, or perhaps to some story now no longer preserved, such as the fate of the Nephilim referred to Gen. vi. 1–4.

**Wilt thou keep:** better than marg. 'dost thou mark.'

**16.** Bickell, following LXX, omits verses 13–16.

**17, 18.** The first line is taken from xxi. 14ᵃ, the second is practically synonymous with xxi. 15ᵃ, the third has points of

And, What can the Almighty do for us?
18 Yet he filled their houses with good things:
But the counsel of the wicked is far from me.
19 [A] The righteous see it, and are glad;
And the innocent laugh them to scorn:
20 *Saying*, Surely they that did rise up against us are cut off,
And the remnant of them the fire hath consumed.
21 Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace:
Thereby good shall come unto thee.
22 Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth,
And lay up his words in thine heart.
23 If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up;
If thou put away unrighteousness far from thy tents.

---

connexion with xxi. 16<sup>a</sup>, while the fourth repeats xxi. 16<sup>b</sup>. The two verses also break the connexion between verses 16 and 19. They are probably an intrusion into the text (so Budde and Duhm). Verse 18 is treated as a gloss by Merx and Siegfried.

**for us**: marg. 'to us.' The Heb. reads 'them' instead of 'us.'

**19.** Cf. Ps. cvii. 42.

**20. the remnant of them**: marg. 'that which remained to them' is to be preferred to the text, and to the alternative marg. 'their abundance.' **the fire** hardly suits those who were destroyed in the deluge. Ewald accordingly referred the description to the destruction of the Cities of the Plain. Dillmann thinks the verse may be a gloss, but its omission would get rid of two lines which disturb his scheme of strophes.

**21.** Now follow exhortation and promise, just as in the peroration to Eliphaz' first speech, and indeed the other speeches of the first cycle. It is noteworthy that in the second cycle no comforting prospect is held out.

The second line is more accurately rendered, according to the consonants, in the marg. 'Thereby shall thine increase be good'; but probably the translation in the text represents what the author wrote.

**22. the law**: better, as in marg., 'instruction.'

**23. thou shalt be built up.** It is much better to read with several scholars, after the LXX, 'and humblest thyself.'

**If thou put away.** The marg. 'Thou shalt put away . . . and shalt lay up' is inappropriate.

And lay thou *thy* treasure in the dust, 24
And *the gold of* Ophir among the stones of the
brooks ;
And the Almighty shall be thy treasure, 25
And precious silver unto thee.
For then shalt thou delight thyself in the Almighty, 26
And shalt lift up thy face unto God.
Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear 27
thee ;
And thou shalt pay thy vows.
Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established 28
unto thee ;
And light shall shine upon thy ways.

---

**24.** The LXX omits this verse, Bickell and Duhm verse 25 also. It makes the sentence long, but there is no cogent reason for omitting it. The meaning is that Job should cast his 'treasure' (*lit.* 'ore') 'in the dust' (marg. 'on the earth') or into the brook, as worthless, and make God his portion. For the second line Budde reads 'And *the gold of* Ophir in the sand of the sea.'

**25. precious silver unto thee :** marg. 'precious silver shall be thine.' The word translated 'precious' is found in Num. xxiii. 22, xxiv. 8, Ps. xcv. 4, in the two former passages of the horns of the wild-ox, in the third of the heights of the mountains. Probably the text should be emended, and several suggestions have been made. Budde reads 'And his instruction shall be silver to thee'; Duhm, 'And silver phylacteries for thee'; Marshall, 'Sound wisdom shall be silver for thee'; Ley, 'So shall the Almighty be thy treasure, silver and strength for thee.' Siegfried leaves a blank. G. H. B. Wright corrects both lines : 'The fields shall be to thee gold, And lead shall become to thee silver.'

**26.** Then he shall be restored to fellowship with God and prosperity, cf. xi. 15.

**27.** Cf. xlii. 9, 10. At present Job bitterly complains because God refuses to hear him.

**pay thy vows :** a vow was a pledge to give something to God, conditionally on His fulfilling a request. The payment of the vow implied that the prayer had been granted. Here the prayer is apparently for recovery, but it might have a wider sense. Job, like Elkanah, might pay his vow at the time of the yearly sacrifice, for God's blessing on his crops and stock (1 Sam. i. 21).

29 When they cast *thee* down, thou shalt say, *There is* lifting
up;
And the humble person he shall save.
30 He shall deliver *even* him that is not innocent:
Yea, he shall be delivered through the cleanness of thine
hands.

---

**29.** A difficult verse. If the text is retained we should probably adopt the marg. 'When they are made low,' and take the subject to be Job's 'ways'; when his path leads him downward into misfortune, he should cheer himself with the thought that it will lead upward. We do not expect any reference to misfortune, however, in this glowing context. Moreover, the word **lifting up** means 'pride,' so that we might take Job's words as a penitent confession, 'Thou shalt say *It was* pride.' The parallel line, and the general use of the verb elsewhere, suggest, however, that the text needs emendation. The general sense required is, God casts down pride, but saves the humble, and probably the original text expressed this thought in a form which we cannot now precisely recover.

**30.** Again rather difficult. The present text seems to mean that God shall deliver him that is not guiltless on account of the innocence of Job; and this interpretation is strongly confirmed by the sequel, since Eliphaz and his friends were delivered at last through Job's intercession. It is quite in the poet's manner to let the speakers drop unconscious prophecies of the final issue. Yet the text is suspicious. It is not only rather short in the Hebrew, but the word translated 'not,' while common in Rabbinic, occurs elsewhere in the O. T. only in the name Ichabod. The omission of the negative by 'many ancient versions' is obviously due to an attempt to make the passage easier; really it makes it harder, for the innocent would surely be saved by his own innocence rather than by Job's.

In this speech Eliphaz, since nothing else is left for him to do, roundly accuses Job of such sins as were only too common in the East among men of his social standing. It is remarkable that, while none of the speeches in the second cycle end with any comforting promise of restoration on repentance, Eliphaz should close this speech, which has gone beyond all the others in its bitter and unjust charges, with so highly coloured a description of Job's happiness if he will turn to God. It is not quite easy to see why. Perhaps the poet wanted to represent Eliphaz as conscious of the harshness of his speech, feeling, it may be, that he had gone too far. But more probably, as he utters his last

Then Job answered and said, **23**
Even to-day is my complaint rebellious : **2**
My stroke is heavier than my groaning.

---

speech, the wish to save his friend becomes uppermost, and after the terrors of the Law he would utter the consolations of the Gospel, seeking to win if he could not alarm.

xxiii. 1–7. Job still rebels, though he seeks to repress his complaint. Would that he could find God, lay his case before Him and hear His reply. He would not overwhelm him with power, but would listen and acquit.

xxiii. 8–17. But He eludes Job's search, though He knows Job's ways ; and Job will come as pure gold from His testing, since he has clung with unswerving fidelity to His commands. But He follows His own will, and is not to be turned from it, and not Job alone is the victim of the destiny He appoints. Therefore he is dismayed by God, cut off as he is by the darkness.

xxiv. 1. Why has God not set times of judgement, when His worshippers might see His days ?

xxiv. 2–4. There are oppressors who seize the property of others, even the defenceless, and drive their wretched victims into hiding.

xxiv. 5–12. There are outcasts, who plunder the fields of the rich to feed their starving children, and lie unclad through the cold night, or huddle against the rock for shelter from the mountain storms. [Some pluck the debtor's child from the widow's breast and take the suckling of the poor in pledge.] Naked, hungry, and thirsty, they carry sheaves, make oil and wine. Though the wounded and dying groan, God takes no heed.

xxiv. 13–17. There are those who shun the light, the murderer, the thief, the adulterer. They dig into houses in the dark, keeping themselves close by day, for daylight is their darkness.

[xxiv. 18–21. His doom is swift, his portion accursed, his vineyards barren. Sheol consumes him, as heat melts the snow. His mother forgets him, his greatness passes into oblivion, he is destroyed, he who ill-treated the childless widow.]

xxiv. 22–25. God ensures the continuance of the mighty, he recovers from deadly sickness ; God preserves him and kindly watches over all his ways. [Soon he is brought to nothing, cut off like the ears of corn in harvest.] Who will venture to gainsay this ?

**2.** It is not an easy verse. The first line yields a fair sense in R.V., especially if Job is taking up charges made by the friends,

3 Oh that I knew where I might find him,
That I might come even to his seat!
4 I would order my cause before him,
And fill my mouth with arguments.
5 I would know the words which he would answer me,
And understand what he would say unto me.
6 Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power?

---

I am just as **rebellious** to-day as I was yesterday. The marg. '*accounted* rebellion' is therefore unnecessary. The alternative marg. 'bitter' requires a slightly different word to be read. It may quite well be correct, the present text being then due to assimilation to the next word. The R.V. rendering of the second line may safely be set aside. The marg. 'my hand is heavy upon my groaning' is perhaps the best rendering of the present text, the verse will then mean, My complaint is rebellious, though I do what I can to repress it. The alternative marg. 'because of my groaning' is adopted by Ley, the meaning would then be that his hands hang heavily down, he is worn out, because of his groaning; but this departs from the usual meaning of the phrase. The LXX and Syriac read 'His hand,' and many scholars (though not Budde) adopt this. Some then interpret that God's hand forces out his groaning into audible expression. But if the writer had meant this, we may presume that he would have said it. The explanation that God represses his groaning, that He will not listen to it, is also unsatisfactory. It is perhaps best to keep the present text.

**3-5.** Why should he not be rebellious, baffled in his passionate longing to find God, where He sits as Judge? Then he would marshal his arguments, and learn God's case against him and the defence of His own action.

**6.** It is very striking how Job's thought of God has softened. In earlier passages, when he had imagined himself before God's bar, it had been with the conviction that God would paralyse him with His terrors, crush him with His omnipotence (ix. 15-20). He had implored Him to release him from his pain, and not affright him with the dread of His Majesty (ix. 34, 35, xiii. 20-22), then he would plead his cause undismayed. Now he expresses the conviction that God would not overwhelm him with power, but listen to his plea. The magnanimity he here ascribes to God contrasts remarkably with the pettiness of which he had before accused Him. And it is all the more noteworthy, since, when God actually speaks, He does contend with him in the greatness of His power. It impoverishes the poem of one of its beauties to

Nay; but he would give heed unto me.
There the upright might reason with him; 7
So should I be delivered for ever from my judge.
Behold, I go forward, but he is not *there*; 8
And backward, but I cannot perceive him:
On the left hand, when he doth work, but I cannot behold him: 9
He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him.
But he knoweth the way that I take; 10
When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

---

correct the text here into harmony with Job's earlier utterances. The marg. reads in the second line, 'Nay; he would only give heed to me.'

**7.** If once I could get to God I should be permitted to plead my cause in virtue of my innocence, and thus win my acquittal. Or the meaning might be, Then it would be plain that he who reasons with Him is a righteous man, and he would therefore be acquitted.

**8, 9.** If he fails to find God it is not for want of effort. The thought is the same as in ix. 11. He is all-pervasive, yet wholly elusive. Budde, Siegfried, and Duhm strike out the verses, the former of which is absent in the LXX. It is thought that they break the connexion between verse 7 and verse 10, and that they are out of place in this context. The ebb and flow of feeling is, it is true, rather rapid, but not incredibly so. There would be no break in the connexion if we could explain verse 10 to give, as God's reason for eluding Job's search, that He knows his innocence and that if tried he would come forth as gold. But this is not probable (see note on verse 10). There is, apart from this, a subtle point of connexion, God's ways are inscrutable to Job (verses 8, 9), but Job's ways are well known to God (verse 10). The adverbs **forward**, &c., might also mean respectively East, West, North, South. The marg. closely connects verse 9$^b$ with verse 10, translating 'He turneth himself to the right hand, that I cannot see him, but he knoweth,' &c. For **when he doth work** it would be better to read with the Syriac 'I seek him.'

**10.** In spite of this self-concealment He still closely watches Job's ways (*lit.* 'the way *that* is with me'), and the trial to which God will subject him will prove his sterling metal. It is not of suffering as the discipline which smelts out the dross, but as the touch-stone which tests the quality of the gold, that he is speaking. Many scholars adopt the marg. 'For' instead of **But**, and then of

11 My foot hath held fast to his steps ;
His way have I kept, and turned not aside.
12 I have not gone back from the commandment of his lips ;
I have treasured up the words of his mouth more than
my necessary food.
13 But he is in one *mind*, and who can turn him ?
And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.
14 For he performeth that which is appointed for me :
And many such things are with him.
15 Therefore am I troubled at his presence ;
When I consider, I am afraid of him.

---

course translate 'If he tried me I should come forth as gold.' The meaning would then be that God will not let Job find Him, just because He knows his innocence, but has resolved not to declare it. But so bitter a charge, while it would have been suitable in Job's earlier speeches, does not harmonize with his present mood. From longing for God he passes to plaintive description of his vain search after Him, then to confidence in the result of his trial, the transitions are rapid, but it is a softened Job who speaks through them all.

**11.** He looks forward with such confidence because he has adhered with unswerving fidelity to the moral standard imposed on man by God. How striking the contrast of his steadfastness with the incalculable waywardness of God's own dealing with men!

**12. more than my necessary food:** the Hebrew has no reference to food, and the literal translation is that given in the marg. 'more than my own law' (alternative marg. 'portion'; see Prov. xxx. 8). The explanation given is that the reference is to the law in the members, which Job has put second to the law of God. If Job had been familiar with the Epistle to the Romans this would have been just credible. The LXX and Vulgate read 'in my bosom,' which is obviously correct, and involves very slight change of the unintelligible Hebrew.

**13. But he is in one** *mind*: the Hebrew is difficult, and neither this rendering nor that in the marg. 'But he is one' is satisfactory. Read with Budde and Duhm 'he has chosen,' or 'decreed' (*bāḥar* for *b$^e$eḥad*).

**14.** The R. V. makes the best of rather uncertain Hebrew. Job has a destiny, fixed by God; not he alone is the victim, who must in misery 'dree his weird.' The verse is omitted in the LXX.

For God hath made my heart faint, 16
And the Almighty hath troubled me:
Because I was not cut off before the darkness, 17
Neither did he cover the thick darkness from my face.
Why are times not laid up by the Almighty? **24**

---

**17.** The translation is incorrect, the second line being unintelligible, and the first introducing a wholly foreign thought. The marg. 'For I am not dismayed because of the darkness, nor because thick darkness covereth my face' gives a fair sense. Eliphaz had said 'Thy light has become darkness' (xxii. 11, see note). Job replies, It is not the darkness that dismays me, but the fact that it is God (verse 16) who has brought it on me. Since, however, Job is hardly likely to have made this subtle distinction, especially since his 'thick darkness' was, more than anything else, *God's* attitude to him, we should probably read with Bickell, Budde, and Duhm 'For I am cut off by the darkness, and thick darkness covers my face.'

xxiv. This chapter has been subjected in recent years to much criticism. Merx led the way in 1871 with the view that verses 9-24, which consist of twelve three-lined stanzas, and describe the course of the world without express blame, were substituted by a redactor for Job's speech, since the latter was too heretical to be preserved. Bickell omits verses 5-8, 10-24, Grill omits verses 5-9, 14-21. Hoffmann assigns verses 13-25 to Bildad and places it after xxv. 6. Siegfried prints verses 13-24 as a correcting interpolation 'conforming the speeches of Job to the orthodox doctrine of retribution.' Duhm thinks verses 1-24 form no connected speech, but a cycle of poems, to which xii. 4-6 and xxx. 2-8 also belong. Unless, however, we insist that the poet must have written throughout in four-lined stanzas, or at least in couplets, we have no ground for denying to him everything written in three-lined stanzas. Moreover, the speech as a whole reflects Job's point of view, though the presence of alien elements has to be recognized. There is, it is true, plausibility in Duhm's suggestion that since we have had in Job's last speech the prosperity of the wicked urged in proof of God's misgovernment of the world, here we expect him to complete his proof by exhibiting the affliction of the righteous. The coincidence of unusual form and unexpected content suffices to justify a measure of uncertainty, but hardly more than a suspended judgement. So Kuenen, who says we can only pronounce a *non liquet*; the explanation of many verses, especially verses 16 ff., is not merely uncertain but

And why do not they which know him see his days?
2 There are that remove the landmarks;
They violently take away flocks, and feed them.
3 They drive away the ass of the fatherless,
They take the widow's ox for a pledge.
4 They turn the needy out of the way:
The poor of the earth hide themselves together.

---

impossible; and under the circumstances any decision on the genuineness is venturesome.

**1.** The marg. reads 'Why is it, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, that they which know him see not his days?' i. e. why, since the Almighty has His appointed times for judgement, are not the righteous allowed to see them? This gives a good sense in itself, but Job's problem concerns, not so much the manifestation of God's judgements, but their non-existence. The text gives the better sense, why does not God have at least certain fixed seasons for judgement, even if He does not exercise unsleeping vigilance and execute prompt judgement? Duhm thinks verses 1-4 constitute a separate poem in three-lined stanzas. Hence he has to lengthen the verse a little to get three lines, 'Why is there no judgement from the Almighty? Why are times hidden with Him, And they that know Him see not His Day?' i. e. Why does not the Day of Judgement break? There is no need, however, to drag in apocalyptic here; besides, the attempt to force through a scheme of three-lined stanzas leads later to strange results.

**2-4.** Mere inspection should suffice to show that in verses 2-4 we have three couplets, not two tristichs. To divide verse 3, in spite of the parallelism, and connect the first line with verse 2, the second with verse 4 (so Duhm), is high-handed theory indeed. Verse 2 represents the powerful oppressors as appropriating the land of others and robbing them of their flocks. Verse 3 refers to their oppression of the defenceless, who had just an ox or an ass to keep them from starvation. Verse 4 shows how, having robbed them, they drive them off to drag out a miserable existence in obscurity.

**and feed them:** if the text is right, the meaning is apparently that they pay no regard to law or public opinion, but feed the flocks they have plundered as their own. This reads in a good deal. Several scholars read, with the LXX, 'with their shepherd.'

**poor:** marg. 'meek.' The two are largely synonymous in the Psalms, but here **the poor** is meant literally.

Behold, as wild asses in the desert 5
They go forth to their work, seeking diligently for meat;
The wilderness *yieldeth* them food for their children.
They cut their provender in the field; 6
And they glean the vintage of the wicked.
They lie all night naked without clothing, 7
And have no covering in the cold.
They are wet with the showers of the mountains, 8
And embrace the rock for want of a shelter.

---

**5.** Now the poet describes a wretched type of pariahs, not necessarily those who have been already mentioned, though their ranks may be recruited from these. We have no definite clue to their identification, beyond what this and the cognate passage xxx. 1-8 contain. They are nameless outcasts, scourged out of the land, barely eking out a livelihood on the poorest food, living in holes, and harried out of society like thieves. These troglodytes were probably aborigines, dispossessed of their lands by some stronger power and driven into the desert.

The verse is not easy. If we omit the words **to their work** we get lines of more normal length, and reading *lō'* 'not' instead of *lō* 'them' (properly 'him') we get the sense, 'Behold, as wild asses of the desert they go forth, Seeking diligently the prey of the wilderness, There is no bread for the children.' The bitterest pang of famine is to see the children starving and to have no bread. The wild ass is gaunt with hunger, and the herds haunt regions remote from men. 'The prey of the wilderness' is part of the metaphor, the scant sustenance they gather is like the rare tufts of herbage, for which the wild ass scours the desert.

**6.** Since they have no bread for the children they are forced to get food how they can. The word translated **provender** means 'fodder,' but **their** is, as the margin says, rather 'his,' and the singular pronoun is difficult. Hitzig followed the LXX in reading 'that which is not his' instead of 'his fodder.' But it would be better, with several scholars, to adopt Merx's suggestion, 'They reap by night in the field.' Hounded from civilization, they steal by night, since they dare not show their faces to beg by day, a vivid touch. For **wicked** it would be better, with Budde, to read 'rich.'

**7.** There is not the slightest ground for impoverishing the description by cutting out verse 7 (with Duhm).

**8.** Unclad and unsheltered they are wet to the skin, as they

9 [**M**] There are that pluck the fatherless from the breast,
And take a pledge of the poor:
10 [**A**] *So that* they go about naked without clothing,
And being an-hungred they carry the sheaves;
11 They make oil within the walls of these men;
They tread *their* winepresses, and suffer thirst.
12 From out of the populous city men groan,
And the soul of the wounded crieth out:
Yet God imputeth it not for folly.

---

seek protection close under the rock from the drenching, driving winter rains in the mountains. For **embrace** cf. Lam. iv. 5.

**9.** If this verse is genuine it is a new picture that is presented to us, the rapacious creditor, who heartlessly plucks the debtor's child from the breast of his widow. The second line is translated in the marg. 'take in pledge that which is on the poor,' but neither this rendering nor that in the text is satisfactory, the words rather mean 'take the poor as pledge.' It would be far better to follow Kamphausen, and, pointing differently, read 'and take in pledge the suckling of the poor,' which gives an excellent parallel to the preceding line. But the verse is out of place here, for in the two following verses the description of the pariahs is probably resumed; in any case they deal with an entirely different subject, moreover this verse belongs rather to verses 2-4. It might come after verse 3, but is perhaps a misplaced marginal gloss.

**10.** The poet may here speak of day-labourers, too poor to purchase food or clothing, who starve in the midst of plenty, since they work in the harvest, the oil-pressing and vintage, but less happy than the ox, unmuzzled as he treads the corn, are not allowed by the greedy owner to assuage their hunger or slake their thirst. Or they may be the shivering wretches already described, who raid the sheaves of the rich, and press out oil and wine from their olives and grapes, and in their presses, of course by stealth.

**12. populous city:** *lit.* 'city of men.' But it is better to point with the Syriac 'From out of the city the dying groan,' and thus get a parallel to the next line. Budde places the verse after $14^b$. Duhm reads, partly on the basis of the LXX, and taking suggestions from Bickell, 'From city and houses are they chased, And the hunger (*lit.* soul) of the children crieth, But there is none to plead for them.'

**imputeth it not for folly:** better, 'taketh no heed of the wrong.'

These are of them that rebel against the light; 13
They know not the ways thereof,
Nor abide in the paths thereof.
The murderer riseth with the light, he killeth the poor 14
and needy;
And in the night he is as a thief.
The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, 15
Saying, No eye shall see me:
And he disguiseth his face.
In the dark they dig through houses: 16

---

**13.** Job now enumerates the members of another type of evil-doer, the night-birds, who shun the light, since it hinders the deeds of darkness which they love.

**14.** First among these children of darkness he names the murderer. But **with the light** yields a very unsuitable sense. It is simplest, with several scholars, to read 'when there is no light' (*lō' 'ōr* for *lā'ōr*). 'Before light' (Bickell) or 'at evening' (Merx) gives good sense, but they are much less like the present text. That he should kill the poor and needy is surprising; he would prowl after more profitable prey. Duhm reads 'he killeth his enemy and foe.' The third line has been brilliantly emended by Merx, whose text is accepted by several commentators, 'and in the night the thief roams about.' The present text is quite unsatisfactory. Budde and Marshall prefix the line to verse 16. This is a much more suitable position, if the text is emended, since the thief is then not mentioned twice, and the order, murderer, adulterer, thief, corresponds to the order of prohibitions in the Decalogue.

**15. disguiseth his face:** marg. 'putteth a covering on his face.' To make assurance doubly sure, he not only waits till it is dark (Prov. vii. 9), but makes himself unrecognizable; as Wetzstein suggests, possibly puts on a woman's veil to slip unnoticed into the harem.

**16.** So in Matt. vi. 20 we read, 'where thieves dig through and steal.' The houses are often made of clay, so that the walls can be dug through without much difficulty. An Eastern burglar would hesitate to break into a house through the door because of the sanctity of the threshold. Crossing the threshold brought the person who entered into covenant with the inmates, and any subsequent violence to them or their property would call down the vengeance of the house-god. Trumbull narrates that a woman explained that a thief would not enter by the door 'because of his

They shut themselves up in the day-time;
They know not the light.
17 For the morning is to all of them as the shadow of death;
For they know the terrors of the shadow of death.
18 [M] He is swift upon the face of the waters;
Their portion is cursed in the earth:
He turneth not by the way of the vineyards.

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reverence.' The translation of the second line in the text is to be preferred to that in the margin, '*Which* they had marked for themselves in the day-time' (so also A.V.), with which the action of the robber in *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* might be compared. It would be a pity to translate the first line 'they break out of houses in the dark,' for though this gives a good contrast to the next line we miss the vivid picture of their digging through the wall under cover of the night. The third line is abnormally short and the first line of verse 17 abnormally long. We may rectify this by transferring **all of them** to this line.

**17.** The morning is to them what the death-shade of midnight is to others, a season of peril, when no work can be done. Others make **the shadow of death** subject, and **morning** predicate, i.e. midnight gloom is their morning, the work-time when they are fullest of energy. This connects well with 16[a], but not with 16[b c]. We hardly expect a reference to the 'terrors of midnight'; if the text is right, **terrors** is spoken rather from the poet's point of view, theirs is the familiarity which breeds contempt.

**18.** It is clear that verses 18–21 do not express the views of Job, since they assert the punishment of the wicked. The Revisers recognize this by prefixing '*Ye say*' in the margin, to suggest that Job is stating the opinions of the friends. It would be simplest to regard the verses as an interpolation intended to modify Job's assertions of God's immoral government, or as a misplaced portion of the friends' contribution to the debate. Marshall regards the verses as an interruption by Bildad forming his third speech, while Ley thinks it belongs to Bildad's speech, which he reconstructs as follows: xxv. 1–6, xxiv. 18–20, xxvii. 13–23. These views can be profitably discussed only in connexion with the larger problems raised by chs. xxv–xxvii.

The first line might refer to sea or river pirates, who scud along in swift ships or 'skiffs of reed' (ix. 26), but this does not fit on to the previous description. Rather the picture of the sinner's fate begins with this line. Like the chip on the torrent he is swept to his doom (cf. Hos. x. 7). A curse rests on his

Drought and heat consume the snow waters : 19
*So doth* Sheol *those which* have sinned.
The womb shall forget him ; the worm shall feed sweetly 20
on him ;
He shall be no more remembered :
And unrighteousness shall be broken as a tree.
He devoureth the barren that beareth not ; 21
And doeth not good to the widow.
[A] He draweth away the mighty also by his power : 22
He riseth up, and no man is sure of life.

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property. The third line seems to mean that he no longer visits his vineyards, since the curse has made them barren. The text, however, is flat, and several emendations have been proposed. Ley reads 'his way does not turn upwards' (deleting a consonant which occurs twice). We might better alter the pointing with Bickell, 'no treader turns towards his vineyards,' because there are no grapes to tread.

**19.** The verse is very irregular, the second line consisting simply of two words, and the first line being too long. The omission of **waters** improves sense and form, but the mischief seems to lie deeper.

**consume :** Heb. 'violently take away.'

**20.** There is no need to alter the first clause, though it is unusually short, the second gives an excellent sense in the English, but it is questionable if the Hebrew will bear this translation. Perhaps the word translated **shall feed sweetly on him** is a corruption of another word which originally belonged to the first clause. In that case we should point the word rendered **worm** differently, and translate 'His greatness shall be no more remembered' (so Bickell, followed by Budde and Duhm).

**21.** Probably it would be better to translate as in the marg. 'Even he that devoureth,' &c. The word does not seem happily chosen. Marshall ingeniously translates 'even he that keeps company with the barren,' Prov. xxix. 3, explaining that the adulterer 'goes where he is least likely to be detected.' The context suggests rather 'ill-treatment' of the childless woman, and this sense is expressed by a slightly different word.

**22.** Job's speech is here resumed. The margin is better: 'Yet *God* by his power maketh the mighty to continue : they rise up, when they believed not that they should live.' They recover, even from what they imagine will prove a fatal sickness.

23 *God* giveth them to be in security, and they rest thereon ;
And his eyes are upon their ways.
24 [**M**] They are exalted; yet a little while, and they are gone ;
Yea, they are brought low, they are taken out of the way
as all other,
And are cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.
25 [**A**] And if it be not so now, who will prove me a liar,
And make my speech nothing worth ?

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**23. And his eyes :** the marg. reads 'But his eyes,' as if God were watching them all the while with the intention of punishing, a quite inappropriate sense here. The meaning is that God graciously watches the ways of the wicked, to keep them from harm, cf. 'for then thou wouldest number my steps' (xiv. 16, see note).

**24.** The immediate impression of the verse is that the prosperity of the wicked is brief, and if so the verse, since the contrary of what Job maintains, must be a mitigating gloss. Usually it is explained of a swift and painless death, when they are full ripe for the reaping, so that their good fortune is unbroken to the end. This would give a quite satisfactory sense, cf. 'And in a moment they go down to Sheol' (xxi. 13). It is not easy, however, to believe that the verse means this. The first word, like several other things in this passage, is surprising Hebrew ; Klostermann by a slight alteration gets the sense 'Have just a little patience, and they are gone.' We might point 'His greatness' as in verse 20.

**tops of the ears of corn :** corn was reaped near the ear, not near the ground, as by us.

This speech reveals a deepened tenderness in Job's personal attitude to God, but on the wider question of God's moral government he occupies the same standpoint as before.

xxv. At this point we meet the very complicated problem of the apportionment of chs. xxv-xxvii among the speakers. According to the present text, Bildad utters the few brief sentences of which ch. xxv consists. Then Job replies and speaks to the end of ch. xxxi, Zophar taking no part in this cycle of the debate. Chs. xxix-xxxi fall outside the debate proper, just as ch. iii does. Ch. xxviii, as will be shown later, is not part of the original poem. We are accordingly confronted at present with chs. xxv-xxvii. The phenomena which excite attention are these : (*a*) Bildad's speech is unusually short ; (*b*) Job's reply contains a section (xxvi. 5-14) very like Bildad's speech ; (*c*) Zophar fails to speak ; (*d*) ch. xxvii has a title prefixed, which has no real parallel else-

Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, **25**

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where in the middle of a speech belonging to the original poem (ch. xxix forming no real exception); (*e*) the greater part of ch. xxvii so completely contradicts Job's views as elsewhere expressed, that it seems very hard to believe that it can have formed part of his speech.

A large number of critics think that the brevity of Bildad's speech is intended by the poet to indicate that the case of the friends is exhausted, if so, it is not surprising that Zophar altogether fails to speak. This makes it impossible to regard the sections of ch. xxvii mentioned above as part of Zophar's missing speech; the critics who take this view accordingly delete them as a later addition, with the exception of a few scholars who defend their presence in a speech of Job. It cannot be denied that the poet may have intended to exhibit the defeat of the friends by this expedient; yet it is rather subtle, and the coincidence of other unusual phenomena strengthens the suspicion that the original arrangement has been disturbed. Zophar, we must remember, was not the man to keep silent so readily as Bildad, as one may see from the impetuous opening of his second speech. In view then of the great similarity between chs. xxv and xxvi. 5–14 it is a plausible suggestion that the latter really belongs to Bildad's speech, at present too short; and in view of the inconsistency of xxvii. 7–23 with Job's standpoint, it is plausible to assign most of this to Zophar. Attractive, however, as this may be, it has difficulties of its own when a detailed reconstruction is attempted. Usually xxvi. 5–14 is placed immediately after xxv. 6. Then xxvi. 1–4 immediately precedes xxvii. 2, and forms the opening of Job's reply, though Preiss and Duhm think xxvi. 2–4 is the opening of Bildad's speech. Since, however, xxvi. 2–4 is more naturally assigned to Job, this modification should probably be rejected. The view that Bildad's speech consists of xxv. 2–6, xxvi. 5–14 is criticized by Kuenen on the ground that xxvi. 5–14 would be suitable after xxv. 2, 3, but not after xxv. 6. This is a forcible objection. But it would be no improvement to wedge xxvi. 5–14 between xxv. 3 and xxv. 4. The speech ought to end with xxvi. 14, after so magnificent a peroration xxv. 4–6 would be anti-climax. Are we then to fall back on the present arrangement of chs. xxv, xxvi? It is true that xxvi. 5–14 is not in itself inappropriate on Job's lips. He has in earlier speeches asserted the greatness of God in a similar strain (ix. 4–13, xii. 7–25). But the case is different here. The description in xxvi. 5–14 connects neither with what goes before nor with what follows. It begins abruptly, and does not in any way lead on to xxvii. 2. Moreover, it is just as true that xxvi. 14 ought to end the speech if that speech is Job's as it is if the speech is Bildad's, but at present this is not

2 Dominion and fear are with him;

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the case. Nor has the description any special relevance to Job's position at this stage of the debate. The reply that he wishes to show that he can surpass the description just given by Bildad is not convincing. Had he wished to outshine the brief two verses devoted to it by Bildad, would he not at least have said, 'I grant all you affirm of God's greatness, but it strengthens your case not a whit'? And why the new title at the beginning of ch. xxvii, if there has been no dislocation?

So far then we are at a deadlock. Neither the present arrangement, nor the reconstruction of Bildad's speech as xxv. 2-6, xxvi. 5-14, nor its reconstruction as xxvi. 1-4, xxv. 2-6, xxvi. 5-14 seems satisfactory. The present writer therefore ventures to offer another suggestion. This is that Bildad's speech consisted originally of xxv. 2, 3, xxvi. 5-14. Kuenen has already been quoted to show that xxvi. 5-14 would suitably follow xxv. 2, 3. We may place it there, however, only on condition that nothing follows it. This involves the elimination of xxv. 4-6. It may seem arbitrary to strike out three such verses. But we may reconcile ourselves to this when we observe that they are a mere echo of xv. 14-16, cf. iv. 17-21. The verses are more in the manner of Eliphaz than of Bildad.

Marshall accepts the usual reconstruction of the speech, viz. xxv. 2-6, xxvi. 5-14, but makes the new suggestion that it belongs to Zophar, not to Bildad. He finds Bildad's third speech in xxiv. 18-21. It may be granted that the speech would suit Zophar, a rougher but also a deeper mind, better than Bildad. But xxiv. 18-21 is also too short for a speech, and is regarded by Marshall rather as an interruption replied to by Job (p. 88). This, however, spoils the symmetry of the debate, and an interruption in place of a set speech is otherwise unexampled. Besides, if a speech by Zophar follows, the explanation of the brevity of Bildad's speech by the exhaustion of the friends' case ceases to be available. The parallels between xxiv. 18-21 and earlier speeches of Bildad seem insufficient to bear the weight of the theory; in the case of xxiv. 20 = xviii. 13 both passages should probably be otherwise explained. It would, perhaps, be more satisfactory to connect xxiv. 18-21 with xxvii. 13-23. Ley does make Bildad's third speech consist of xxv. 1-6, xxiv. 18-20, xxvii. 13-23. But the combination of the two latter passages with xxv. 1-6 is quite unlikely. Moreover, why should Zophar have no speech? If those scholars are right who find Zophar's third speech embedded in xxvii. 7-23, neither Marshall's solution nor Ley's can be accepted. This question, however, may be deferred till we reach that point. Meanwhile we may be content to find Bildad's second speech in

He maketh peace in his high places.
Is there any number of his armies? 3
And upon whom doth not his light arise?

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xxv. 2, 3, xxvi. 5, 4, and regard Job's reply as opening with xxvi. 2–4 and continued in xxvii. 2.

xxv. 1–6. Bildad replies by reference to God's might and majesty, the peace He has brought out of angelic contests, the number of His armies, the universal character of His government. [How can the woman-born be just before God? In His sight the heavenly bodies have no lustre or purity, how much less such a worm as man!]

xxvi. 1–4. Job sarcastically speaks of the helpful and instructive character of Bildad's speech. Who is the object of his instruction, and what is the source of his inspiration?

xxvi. 5–14. [Probably misplaced continuation of Bildad's speech.] The dead tremble before Him, for Sheol lies open to His gaze. The earth is hung over empty space. The clouds support without bursting their weight of water, and hide the throne of God. At the line of separation between light and darkness God has traced a circle [i. e. the rim of the vault of heaven] on the waters. The pillars supporting the sky tremble at His reproof. He stills the sea with His power and pierces the chaos-monster by His wisdom. He makes the sky bright by the wind, and His hand pierced leviathan. All this is the fringe of His ways, small is the whisper of Him that comes to us, far beyond us the thunder of His voice!

**2. peace in his high places:** the reference is to battles of the heavenly powers. But whether the 'war in heaven,' to which God puts an end, is a rebellion against Himself or a struggle between angelic factions is not clear. As we are reminded in verses 12, 13 and in ix. 13, Isa. li. 9, He vanquished the chaos-monster Tiamat and her brood. Conflicts between the angels are referred to in Dan. x. 13, 20, 21, xi. 1. Further reference to angelic irregularities and their punishment may be found in xxi. 22; Ps. lviii, lxxxii; Isa. xxiv. 21, 22.

**3. armies:** the host of heaven, including angels and stars, which were closely associated and often identified, perhaps also wind, rain, lightning and other elements that belong to the sky.

**his light:** God's light flashes on all things, nothing, even the most obscure and impenetrable, is concealed from Him. The reference is not to sunrise, the thought is the same as in Heb. iv. 13. On this follows admirably xxvi. 5, The dead tremble, for even Sheol, realm of darkness though it is, lies naked and exposed to His view.

4 [**M**] How then can man be just with God?
Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?
5 Behold, even the moon hath no brightness,
And the stars are not pure in his sight:
6 How much less man, that is a worm!
And the son of man, which is a worm!

**26** [A] Then Job answered and said,
2 How hast thou helped him that is without power!
How hast thou saved the arm that hath no strength
3 How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom,
And plentifully declared sound knowledge!
4 To whom hast thou uttered words?

---

**4.** It has been suggested in the introductory remarks that verses 4-6 are a gloss, since it is not merely difficult to fit them into a tenable reconstruction, but they simply repeat, with trifling variation, the words of Eliphaz xv. 14-16, cf. iv. 17-21. Thus we are able to bring xxvi. 5 into immediate connexion with xxv. 3.

**5.** In xv. 15 Eliphaz had said 'the heavens are not clean in his sight.' His imitator makes a couplet out of this by enumerating moon and stars separately. Physical brightness and ethical purity are not sharply distinguished here. Moon and stars were not mere physical masses, but 'bodies celestial,' animated like other 'bodies' by spirits.

**6.** Unfortunately **worm** has to do duty here as a rendering of two Hebrew words.

xxvi. At this point Job's speech begins. Probably verses 1-4 should be placed immediately before xxvii. 2, this being preferable to the view of Preiss and Duhm, that verses 2-4 formed the introduction to Bildad's speech and ought therefore to be inserted before xxv. 2.

**3. plentifully:** the irony would be more biting if Bildad's speech had consisted merely of the five verses assigned to him in the present text. But it is sufficiently appropriate if it consisted of sixteen verses, for then Job would mean, In your elaborate description, how little there is to the purpose! It would in any case be absurd to argue on the basis of this expression that Bildad's speech must have been a short one. That is not a question to be settled by such trivialities.

**4.** To think of *your* teaching *me*! you must have been inspired

And whose spirit came forth from thee?
They that are deceased tremble 5
Beneath the waters and the inhabitants thereof.
Sheol is naked before him, 6
And Abaddon hath no covering.
He stretcheth out the north over empty space, 7

---

Again very biting if Bildad's speech consisted of the poor five verses at present assigned to him, and three of these borrowed from Eliphaz. Once more, however, appropriate also after xxv. 2, 3, xxvi. 5–14; such heavenly lore, Job scoffs, points to a heavenly origin.

**To whom:** some translate 'with whom,' i.e. by whose help. The improved parallelism is too dearly bought.

**5.** Here Bildad's speech is resumed after xxv. 3. He has just said God's light shines on all, now he illustrates this by the deepest darkness of all. Eliphaz had condemned the thought that the exalted God could not see through the thick cloud men's doings on the earth. Bildad affirms that God's penetrating gaze strikes down through the sea to the gloomy underworld itself. As His light flashes into it the scared spirits cower beneath it.

**They that are deceased:** marg. 'The shades,' Heb. 'The Rephaim.' The word is often thought to mean 'the weak,' and to have been used as a name for the feeble spirits of the dead, pale, bloodless shadows of their old selves. The Rephaim are also mentioned as a race of giants (Deut. ii. 11, 20), and some think the giants, as the oldest race, which first went down to Sheol, came to be regarded as pre-eminently the inhabitants of Sheol, and thus the name came to include all the shades. In that case it would have nothing to do with the idea of 'weakness.' The theory is not quite easy; at the same time it would be an advantage to think here of 'the giants' long ago worsted in their battle with God and thrust down to Sheol. That the feeble shades should shrink from God's light is not to be wondered at; even those mighty giants, who had once done battle with Him, writhe under it.

**and the inhabitants thereof:** probably the great sea-monsters are specially in the author's mind. Bickell and Duhm read 'who have their dwellings beneath the waters,' which is, perhaps, an improvement.

**6.** Cf. Prov. xv. 11, 'Sheol and Abaddon are before Yahweh.' For 'Abaddon,' marg. 'Destruction,' cf. also xxviii. 22, xxxi. 12, Ps. lxxxviii. 11. According to Ps. cxxxix. 8 Yahweh's presence is to be found in Sheol, here it is stripped to His view.

**7.** It has been very commonly thought that the **north** here

And hangeth the earth upon nothing.
8 He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds ;
And the cloud is not rent under them.
9 He closeth in the face of his throne,
And spreadeth his cloud upon it.
10 He hath described a boundary upon the face of the waters,
Unto the confines of light and darkness.

---

means the northern heavens, especially the pole-star and the stars that cluster about it (so, among our own scholars, Davidson and Marshall). Elsewhere, however, the sky is supposed to hang over the earth. The parallelism also suggests that **the north** here refers to earth, not to heaven. The north was to the Jews the region of great mountains, how wonderful that all their weight should rest on nothing! The second line may mean that the earth is suspended from nothing, or more probably that it is suspended over nothing. It is not the thought that it is free of all support. It is supported from above, but has no support beneath, it hangs over empty space.

**8.** From Sheol (verse 6) his description mounts to earth (verse 7), now it mounts again to the sky. The clouds are like water-skins ; though charged with water they do not burst.

**9.** The text seems to mean that God conceals His throne by the clouds so that men cannot see it. It would be possible also to take the word translated **throne** to mean 'full moon,' the reference would then be to eclipses, not to mere clouding over of the moon. Duhm points the word translated **face of** differently, and renders 'He sets firm the pillars of His throne.' The sense **closeth in** is unusual.

**10.** According to Babylonian cosmology the earth was regarded as a disk floating on an ocean, 'the great deep,' and thus completely surrounded by water ; on the surface of the waters that thus encircled the earth rested the great dome of the overarching firmament. Within this dome is the realm of light, without it is the realm of darkness. **The confines of light and darkness** means the boundary line where the two realms touch, i. e. the horizon. Originally in the time of primaeval chaos, according to Gen. i. 2, darkness was over the whole face of the deep. Then light was created, and darkness and light were separated. There, however, light and darkness are identified with day and night. Here, apparently, the division is local, within the circle is the region of light, without it the region of darkness.

The pillars of heaven tremble 11
And are astonished at his rebuke.
He stirreth up the sea with his power, 12
And by his understanding he smiteth through Rahab.
By his spirit the heavens are garnished; 13
His hand hath pierced the swift serpent.

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**11. The pillars of heaven** are the mountains. The rim of the celestial vault rests on **the face of the waters** as already explained. Within this encircling ocean is the earth, and from it spring the mountains which near the outer edge of the earth are high enough to reach and support the firmament at various points. Thus the full weight of the dome does not rest on the outer ocean, part rests on the mountains, just as a roof may be supported by pillars as well as by walls. Mighty though these giant mountains are, they tremble when God rebukes them. Like the temple threshold beneath Isaiah's feet at the voice of the seraphim, so they rock at the rebuke of God. The **rebuke** refers to the crashing peals of thunder. So in the description of the thunderstorm in Ps. xxix we read, 'He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild-ox.' Cf. ix. 6; Ps. xviii. 10–15.

**12. stirreth up:** marg. 'stilleth.' In Jer. xxxi. 35, Isa. li. 15 the word is used in the sense 'to stir up,' and this rendering is adopted here by the majority of commentators. The reference is to the contest of Yahweh with the chaos-monster (see note on vii. 12, ix. 13), and if we translate 'stirreth up' the allusion is to the inciting of the monster to battle, if we render 'stilleth' its subjugation is in the poet's mind. The latter is favoured not only by the parallelism, but by the reference to power, since it needed no power to incite Rahab, though confidence to do this would be given by consciousness of power. **The sea** is 'the deep' of Gen. i. 2, *t^ehom*, identical with Tiamat, here called Rahab.

**smiteth through Rahab:** see ix. 13; Isa. li. 9; Ps. lxxxix. 10. In His conflict God did not rely on sheer force alone, but also on His wisdom, similarly Marduk in the Babylonian myth.

**13.** If the text is right the first line means that the breath of God makes the sky clear and bright, by blowing away the dark clouds that shroud it in gloom. The LXX read a different text, 'the bars of heaven shudder at Him,' but though Gunkel accepts this, it is questionable if any suitable meaning can be imposed on it.

**swift serpent:** marg. 'fleeing,' or 'gliding.' This serpent is identical with 'leviathan' in iii. 8; cf. also Isa. xxvii. 1.

14 Lo, these are but the outskirts of his ways:
And how small a whisper do we hear of him!
But the thunder of his power who can understand?

---

**14.** All this is only the fringe of the mystery of the universe, and all we hear, marvellous though it is, is but a whisper, a faint far-off murmur of God's working. We have no senses by which to apprehend the mighty forces that He controls; they are the rolling thunder that would deafen us; but mercifully we stand at the outermost edge, where the thunder at the centre floats softly to us as a still small voice.

In this speech, xxv. 2, 3, xxvi. 5-14, if it is rightly assigned to Bildad, we have the familiar assertion of the incomprehensible greatness of God, as a rebuke to Job's criticism of His government. Job's reply opens with xxvi. 2-4, and scornfully flings aside the rhetoric, which contributes no helpful explanation of his difficulties. Job has said 'God rules the world unrighteously,' how irrelevant Bildad's reply, God is all-powerful, far beyond our understanding!

xxvii. It has already been mentioned that this chapter includes much which, in the judgement of most scholars, cannot have been uttered by Job. There is no difficulty about verses 4-6, but verses 7-23 raise objections of the most serious kind. Job here abandons the position he has held throughout the debate and adopts that of the friends. In verses 7-10 he describes the hopeless case of the ungodly, and says that God will not hear his cry. But it has been his own complaint hitherto that God would not hear his cry; is it credible that he should assert that God would treat the ungodly as He had in fact treated him? Would he have made the damaging admission that he and the godless belonged to the same category after such passionate protestations of innocence? Here he asserts the miserable fate of the wicked, though in chs. xxi and xxiv he has dwelt upon their prosperity and the lack of any retribution. It is no adequate reply to say that Job here rises to a truer view. In the context immediately preceding he has charged God with taking away his right and embittering his soul. And in his later utterances he still complains that he cries to God but receives no answer, that God is persecuting him and will bring him to his death (xxx. 20-23). Moreover, such a denial of his former assertions is altogether unmotived. We may conclude with much confidence that verses 7-10 form no part of Job's speech.

In the rest of the chapter, verses 11-23, we have the same contradiction of views, which Job has previously defended. Here again he asserts the unmixed calamities which will overtake the wicked and his posterity, though in chs. xxi and xxiv he had said

[**M**] And Job again took up his parable, and said, **27**

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that right to his death the wicked continued in prosperity. And not content with denying his previous positions, he represents himself (verse 11) as instructing the three friends, who had all along maintained what he now says for the first time, and is sufficiently shameless to twit them with folly (verse 12), though at last he has come to agree with them. It has been said that Job, having won his case against the friends, now abandons the one-sided position forced on him by the controversy and states the position as it really exists. This is an astonishing line of defence. For it means that Job gives up the arguments that have been victorious against the friends, adopts the views he has demolished, and calls the friends fools because they do not see the very things which throughout the debate they have consistently affirmed. As neither Job nor the poet have done anything to make such an intellectual somersault credible, we may safely reject so desperate an expedient. It might have been possible, if Job had explained that he had perhaps expressed himself too sweepingly, and had then proceeded to make a balanced statement, dealing out even-handed justice to both sides. But this is just what he does not do. To say that he modifies his former statements is a grotesque under-statement, he bluntly contradicts them. And so far from attempting to reach a balanced view, he is just as sweeping in his affirmation of the evil fate of the godless as previously he had been sweeping in his denial. Nor can we suppose that Job would have argued, You have seen the evil fate of the wicked, why then do you think so foolishly about me? He could not have invited the crushing retort, Yes, it is just because we have seen the calamity of the wicked that from your calamity we judge you to be wicked. And can we seriously think of Job, after the experience he had suffered, saying, 'If his children be multiplied it is for the sword'? Others have said that Job is now attacking the friends with their own weapons: On your own showing the fate of the wicked is terrible, learn that this will be your fate for your wicked slanders against me. This artificial explanation must be altogether rejected; it is read into the passage, not extracted from it or even suggested by anything in it. It is clear from all this that verses 7–23 cannot be assigned to Job. As the descriptions of the woes of the ungodly are just of the same character as are elsewhere uttered by the friends, it is natural to suppose that here, too, it is one of the friends and not Job that is speaking. Since, according to the present arrangement, Zophar is silent in the third round of the debate, the most obvious suggestion is that here we have a part of his missing speech. Kennicott, in fact, long ago suggested that verses 13–23 should be assigned to him. It has often been urged against this that the poet wished to indicate by the brevity of

2 [A] As God liveth, who hath taken away my right ;

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Bildad's speech that the case of the friends was exhausted, and therefore no speech is to be expected from Zophar. If, however, we are right in assuming that Bildad's speech originally consisted of xxv. 2, 3, xxvi. 5–14 (see p. 232) this objection loses its force. Probably then we should assign verses 7–10 and verses 13–23 to Zophar, though verses 8–10 may with some plausibility be regarded as a gloss (see note on verse 8). It might be plausibly objected to this that we hardly expect Zophar to be repeating at the end of the third cycle of the debate that which was the theme of all the speakers in the second. Yet when we look more closely there is a beautiful symmetry here. In their first speeches the friends say, God is great, just, and wise ; in their second speeches they say, It fares ill with the wicked. In the third cycle Eliphaz drives home the personal accusation to Job. Their case is now exhausted, but the poet's device for continuing the debate is not to let Bildad and Zophar repeat the personal charges, but to let Bildad repeat the general theme of the first set of speeches, and Zophar the general theme of the second set. The only alternative view would be that the portions here assigned to Zophar are a later insertion, and this is the opinion of several scholars, including Wellhausen, Kuenen, and Dillmann. It is obviously a preferable course to retain the passages rather than to strike them out, and since they exactly fit Zophar's standpoint, and there is no reason why he should not speak, the solution here adopted seems best. Job's reply to Bildad has been largely lost. So far we have seen that it consisted of xxvi. 2–4, xxvii. 2–6. Following this was probably a description of God's misgovernment, as in xxi and xxiv. Of this verse 12 is the conclusion. As Job draws the picture he appeals to the consciousness of the friends that he is right. They, too, have seen it, why then so foolishly maintain the contrary ? That the speech ended with verse 12 is confirmed by the similar ending xxi. 34, and to a less degree by that in xxiv. 25. The only other fragment of the speech that may have been preserved is verse 11, which may well have introduced the description. This is preferable to making verse 11 part of Zophar's speech, which would involve the change of 'you' into 'thee.' The rest of the speech containing the description itself was probably eliminated because it shocked orthodox feeling too deeply.

Marshall thinks verses 7–23 can be regarded as uttered by Job if we assume that the debate once ended here and that the poet wished Job to 'come out right at last.' The former assumption removes the objection caused by Job's subsequent utterances, but the present writer is unable to accept it. And we should still have the difficulty caused by the earlier part of the chapter. And

And the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul;
(For my life is yet whole in me, 3
And the spirit of God is in my nostrils;)

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all the other difficulties remain. Job does not come out right; he simply asserts the friends' view in the same extreme form in which he had previously asserted the opposite.

xxvii. 1–6. Job [continuing the speech begun xxvi. 2–4] affirms by the life of God, who has robbed him of his right, that the utterance he is about to make, in full possession of his powers, is true. He will in no wise admit the friends to be in the right, but will maintain his innocence to the last.

xxvii. 11, 12. He will teach them God's ways. [Here there seems to have followed a description of God's action on the lines of chs. xxi, xxiv, but probably even bolder, and hence suppressed.] They have themselves seen it, why so foolishly deny it?

xxvii. 7–10. [Zophar] expresses the wish that his enemy may fare as the godless, who has no hope when his life comes to an end, for God will not hear his cry in distress.

xxvii. 13–23. [Zophar] describes the portion of the godless. His children are destroyed by sword, famine and pestilence; his wealth shall be taken from him and given to the righteous; he is himself overtaken with terrors and swept to destruction by God.

xxvii. **1.** This verse is probably a later insertion, though if the whole of xxv, xxvi really belongs to Bildad, then it would simply be an alteration of the usual formula 'And Job answered and said' occasioned by the dislocation in ch. xxvi.

**2–4.** The R. V. rightly prints verse 3 as a parenthesis. The formula of oath is contained in verse 2, its content in verse 4. It is remarkable that, while Job swears by the life of God, he should assert so firmly the unrighteousness of His dealings with him. The parenthesis seems to mean, I am still myself, have not lost my mental energy; disease may have captured the outworks, but the fortress remains my own. The point of it is that his solemn declaration is not to be regarded as a morbid utterance, but one made with the fullest consciousness of all that it means. There is no need, with Duhm, to place verse 3 after verse 5, though it would be suitable enough there. Several scholars translate as in the marg. 'All the while my breath is in me, And the spirit of God is in my nostrils; Surely my,' &c. But Job does not mean that so long as he lives he will not speak falsely, but that his present assertion of innocence is true. It would be better in verse 4 to substitute, with the marg., the present for the future. **As God liveth:** Ley reads 'Lo!' or 'surely God hath

4 Surely my lips shall not speak unrighteousness,
Neither shall my tongue utter deceit.
5 God forbid that I should justify you:
Till I die I will not put away mine integrity from me.
6 My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go:
My heart shall not reproach *me* so long as I live.
7 Let mine enemy be as the wicked,
And let him that riseth up against me be as the unrighteous.
8 For what is the hope of the godless, though he get him gain,
When God taketh away his soul?

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taken,' but this yields a weaker sense. **vexed my soul:** Heb. 'made my soul bitter.'

**5. justify you:** i. e. confess you to be in the right in your accusations against me. The second line means, I will not renounce the affirmation of my integrity, not, I will not cease to walk uprightly. Similarly **righteousness** in verse 6 has the judicial sense of 'innocence.' He means, I will never cease to plead 'Not Guilty.'

**6.** Better as in the marg. 'My heart doth not reproach *me for* any of my days.' Reviewing my whole life, I have nothing to regret.

**7.** Here probably Zophar is speaking. He is so convinced of the evil lot of the wicked that the fate he imprecates on the foe he most bitterly hates is that he may be as the godless. The point is not so much that he trusts misfortune will overwhelm his enemy—of course Zophar wishes that—but that the worst fate which can befall a man is that meted out to the wicked. So strong an assertion that the wicked are those most heavily punished is not very conceivable in Job's mouth.

**8. though he get him gain:** the marg. is better, 'when God cutteth him off, when he taketh away his soul.' The verb translated **taketh away** means 'draweth out,' a slightly different word would give the sense 'requireth' (cf. Luke xii. 20), and this is read by many scholars. The verse is on either view difficult, since it seems to postulate that the God-fearing has hope in his death, while the godless has none. This does not harmonize with the standpoint in the rest of the book, which assumes the old-fashioned Hebrew doctrine of the state after death, though the author himself seems to have turned with longing towards the thought of a happy future life. The text may need emendation; if we have it in its original form, we should perhaps regard

Will God hear his cry, 9
When trouble cometh upon him?
Will he delight himself in the Almighty, 10
And call upon God at all times?
I will teach you concerning the hand of God; 11
That which is with the Almighty will I not conceal.
Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it; 12
Why then are ye become altogether vain?
This is the portion of a wicked man with God, 13
And the heritage of oppressors, which they receive from
the Almighty.
If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword; 14

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verses 8–10 as a gloss by a reader, who held not only the traditional view of the lot of the ungodly, but also the later doctrine of a distinction, in their ultimate fate, between the righteous and the wicked, such as we find in Pss. xlix, lxxiii.

**10.** For the first line cf. xxii. 26ª.

**at all times:** if the text is right, the reference is to the experiences of life in general. The impression made by verses 8–10 is rather that the special crisis mentioned in verse 8 is intended throughout. Duhm reads 'If he call to Him, will He accept him?'

**11.** Probably this verse is part of Job's speech, introducing a description by Job of the immorality of God's government of the world, which was suppressed on account of its boldness (see p. 240).

**12.** It is quite incredible that Job should have uttered this verse in connexion with such a description of God's judgement on the wicked as we find in verses 13-23, seeing that all along he had maintained the opposite, so that the charge of folly would recoil on himself, while the friends had asserted what he now maintains, so that it would be sheer stupidity on his part to taunt them with the folly of denying what they had consistently affirmed. There is no reason for striking out the verse. The reference can only be to what they have seen of God's immoral government, and therefore must have come originally at the end of the description introduced by verse 11 (see p. 240).

**13.** The description that now follows probably belongs to Zophar's third speech (see pp. 238–240). The plurals in the second line should probably be corrected into singulars.

**14.** Job's own children were numerous and suddenly cut off,

And his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.
15 Those that remain of him shall be buried in death,
And his widows shall make no lamentation.
16 Though he heap up silver as the dust,
And prepare raiment as the clay;
17 He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on,
And the innocent shall divide the silver.
18 He buildeth his house as the moth,
And as a booth which the keeper maketh.

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how could the poet have been guilty of placing this line in the bereaved father's lips? Job's view of the glad life lived by the large family of the oppressor is to be found in xxi. 11. It is the friends who have made similar assertions to those in this verse, v. 4, xviii. 19, xx. 20.

**multiplied:** several render 'grow up.'

**15.** Sword and famine are now, as often, completed into a triad by the mention of pestilence, which is the sense **death** bears here (cf. Jer. xv. 2). It would be better to translate 'buried by death,' a gruesome way of saying that the pestilence slays them and disposes of the remains; in other words, they lie unburied, and the plague, which has killed them, works on to their decomposition.

**his widows:** this implies not only that he is a polygamist, but that when the calamities overtake his sons he is himself dead. His death, however, is not mentioned till a later point. It is much better to read with the LXX 'their widows.' The sons are rooted out, some by sword, others by famine, others by pestilence. Those who are killed by plague are not buried, and their widows do not raise the wail over them, cf. Jer. xxii. 10-19; Ps. lxxviii. 64. The plural in the latter passage has not influenced the LXX here, rather the plural has been altered into conformity with the other singular possessives. Cf. the ghastly description in Amos vi. 9, 10 (if through the corrupt text one can guess at the original meaning).

**16. clay,** like **dust,** expresses abundance.

**18. moth:** probably we should with most scholars read 'spider,' as the Syriac (cf. viii. 14). The LXX has combined the two readings.

**booth:** that is the frail structure made for the use of the night-watchman in a vineyard. It was not meant to be permanent, and so was roughly put together and flimsy in construction, cf. Isa. i. 8.

He lieth down rich, but he shall not be gathered ; 19
He openeth his eyes, and he is not.
Terrors overtake him like waters ; 20
A tempest stealeth him away in the night.
The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth ; 21
And it sweepeth him out of his place.
For *God* shall hurl at him, and not spare : 22
He would fain flee out of his hand.
Men shall clap their hands at him, 23
And shall hiss him out of his place.

[W] Surely there is a mine for silver, **28**

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**19. he shall not be gathered :** the sense is not at all clear, perhaps the meaning is, not joined in burial with his ancestors. As the marg. says, '*Some ancient versions have,* shall do so no more.' This reading of the LXX and Syriac is now adopted by many. The second line may mean he wakes and is immediately destroyed, or he wakes and is rich no longer. If, as the words most naturally suggest, we have here, as in 2 Kings xix. 35 = Isa. xxxvii. 36, a bull, when he gets up next morning he will find himself dead, we can hardly make the poet responsible for it.

**20.** For 'like waters' Merx and some others read 'by day,' to correspond to 'in the night' in the next line.

**21.** The LXX, followed by Bickell, omits this and the two following verses, Budde omits 21, 22. The order is rather strange, but it is not necessary on that account to strike the verses out.

**23.** Possibly we should regard God as the subject, in which case we should compare for God's derision and anger Ps. ii. 4, 5 and Wisdom's mockery of the scorners, Prov. i. 24-33. The translation in the text, however, is supported by xxii. 19.

xxviii. This chapter is regarded by very many scholars as a later insertion. Since it opens with the word 'For' (so marg. correctly), a logical connexion with what precedes seems to be implied. No attempt to trace it has, however, been successful, and that whether the present arrangement of ch. xxvii is retained, or whether xxvii. 13-23 is omitted, or assigned to Zophar. Since something must have preceded, we might infer that the chapter is an excerpt from another poem. But Duhm has recently suggested a better solution. He gives reasons for supposing that

And a place for gold which they refine.

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since the words 'Whence cometh wisdom [or 'where shall wisdom be found'] and where is the place of understanding?' occur as a refrain in the poem, they were therefore probably placed at the beginning. In that case it was natural that the poet should continue, 'For there is a mine for silver,' &c. While the formal difficulty created by 'For' is thus removed, the very theory which removes it favours the view that we have in this artistically constructed poem, not a section of the debate, but an independent composition. Quite apart from this, it is difficult to fit the chapter into the movement of the argument. Its theme is that man cannot attain wisdom, this being the possession of God alone. It is not easy to see the bearing of this on the question discussed. It would be more suitable in the mouth of one of the friends than in Job's mouth. For Job feels the problem press heavily on him, and is by no means inclined to accept the attitude here recommended. Before and after he chafes against the limitations imposed upon him, and will not submit to the doctrine that God's wisdom is incommunicable, and that man must cheerfully acquiesce in his inability to understand it. Only after the vision of God and the Divine speech does Job attain this settled resignation to the mystery of God's ways. And this suggests a further, and the decisive reason why Job cannot have uttered this part of the poem. If he had already reached the position here accepted, the speech of Yahweh would have been unnecessary. While the poem on Wisdom is in itself a very fine one, its insertion here spoils the artistic effect, and introduces an irrational element into the debate. Nor is it likely that those scholars are right who assign it to Zophar. Certainly it harmonizes better with the view of the friends, still it is only very slenderly connected with the debate, and has no point of attachment with what immediately precedes. It is also too serene in temper for Zophar, its calm and lofty tone contrasting strongly with the rabid violence of his speeches. If Duhm's suggestion is correct, the impression we get from it is that it is a poem complete in itself, not part of a larger whole. How it came to be inserted here is not clear. Perhaps a reader wished to indicate the futility of a debate which sought to understand a mystery reserved by God in His own counsel.

xxviii. 1–6, 9–11. [Where can wisdom be found?] For precious metals are to be found by man's persistent effort to penetrate the rocks by mines, where he lights the darkness and swings in midair without foothold, reaping the harvest of wealth below as grain harvest is reaped above. He cuts passages in the solid rocks, stops the streams from weeping into them, sees and brings to light the hidden treasure.

Iron is taken out of the earth, 2
And brass is molten out of the stone.
*Man* setteth an end to darkness, 3
And searcheth out to the furthest bound
The stones of thick darkness and of the shadow of death.

xxviii. 12, 7-8, 13-19. But where shall wisdom be found? No bird's eye has seen the path, no beast of prey has trodden it. Man does not know the way, nor can it be found in the land of the living. The deep and the sea confess that they do not possess it. No gold or jewel is precious enough to purchase it.

xxviii. 20-28. Whence then cometh wisdom, since it is hid from all living creatures, even the fowls of the air. Abaddon and Death have heard but a rumour. It is God alone, the All-seeing One, who knows its home. When He carried through the work of creation He created Wisdom and understood its inmost nature. To man He has appointed fear of the Lord as his wisdom.

xxviii. **1.** As already mentioned, the refrain 'Whence cometh wisdom and where is the place of understanding?' probably stood at the beginning of the poem as its theme. Then the poet naturally proceeds, 'For there is a mine for silver.' The line of thought is that other precious things have their home in the material universe, and however inaccessible it may be, men contrive to find the way. So, too, one may think that the skill and perseverance, which track the precious metals or the flashing jewels to their secret retreat, may carry through successfully the quest for Wisdom. Cf. Matthew Arnold, *Empedocles on Etna* (the passage beginning 'Look the world tempts our eye').

**is**: emphatic.

**mine**: *lit.* 'source.' This is the only passage in the O.T. where we have any detailed description of mining operations. Palestine, on account of its geological formation, is poor in minerals, though not wholly destitute, as we learn from Deut. viii. 9: 'a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.' There was a good deal of mining in neighbouring countries, especially in Egypt, but also on Lebanon, on the east of the Jordan, and in Idumaea. Whether the old mines in the Sinaitic Peninsula were still worked in the poet's time is doubtful. It is also uncertain whether he had actually visited the mines or knew of them only by hearsay.

**2. brass**: better 'copper.' **earth**: marg. 'dust.'

**3.** The miners set an end to darkness by driving shafts into the earth, and where the light of day can pierce no farther they dissipate the darkness with their lamps. Thus they penetrate to

4 He breaketh open a shaft away from where men sojourn ;
They are forgotten of the foot *that passeth by* ;
They hang afar from men, they swing to and fro.
5 As for the earth, out of it cometh bread :
And underneath it is turned up as it were by fire.
6 The stones thereof are the place of sapphires,

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the utmost limits, and from the deepest gloom drag out the precious ore. Duhm reads 'Man searcheth the darkness to the utmost bound, Seeketh out the stones of thick darkness and of the shadow of death.'

**4.** The marg. reads, 'The flood breaketh out from where men sojourn ; *even the waters* forgotten of the foot ; they are minished, they are gone away from man.' The translation in the text probably gives the general sense, describing the miners plying their hazardous occupation. But the second line yields an unlikely sense. It is more probable that the reference should be to the fact that the miners, as they are suspended by a rope in the shaft, do not support themselves with the foot ; we might translate 'they hang without foot,' or, as we should say, 'without foothold.' Bickell has suggested that we should add the word *'ōr* 'light' after the somewhat similar word *gār*, thus getting the sense 'He breaketh open a shaft far from them that sojourn in light.' Ley's suggestion, that we should substitute *nēr* 'light' for *gār*, involves a slighter change and yields a neater phrase, 'He breaketh a shaft far from light.' Duhm's objections to the general sense are exaggerated, and his corrections accordingly unnecessary. Marshall prefers the margin to text, thinking that the flooding of a mine is described ; but for *gār* he reads *gir* 'lime,' rendering 'the stream burst in from the limestone.' The context, however, and general drift of the passage strongly favours the reference to the marvellous feats of man in his quest for treasure ; the thought of the flooding of the mine is less relevant, and verse 11 tells against it.

**swing** : marg. 'flit.'

**5.** Perhaps a contrast is intended between the quiet growth of the corn above and the wild overturning that goes on in the mines below. But is not the point rather that, just as man overturns the soil with the plough to win the harvest of golden grain, so he overturns it below to win the harvest of gold and gems, ruthless in his lust for gain ? We ought perhaps to read 'by fire' instead of 'as by fire,' the difference in the Hebrew being very slight. Fire was used in blasting the rocks. Budde unnecessarily regards verses 5, 6 as a later addition.

And it hath dust of gold.
That path no bird of prey knoweth, 7
Neither hath the falcon's eye seen it:
The proud beasts have not trodden it, 8

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**6. it hath dust of gold.** It is not clear whether 'it' means 'the place,' or 'the sapphire' which in some cases has 'dust of gold' in it, i. e. iron pyrites. The marg. renders 'And he winneth lumps of gold.'

**7.** According to the present arrangement, the path unknown to the keen-sighted bird, untrodden by the beast of prey, is the path which man has cut into the earth in his search for treasure. Although Duhm speaks too strongly in calling this absurd, yet he is surely right in saying that the path here mentioned is that to the home of Wisdom. This is proved by verse 21, where the author alludes to its concealment from the eyes of all living and from the fowls of the air, as though this had already been expressly mentioned. Duhm accordingly suggests that here the refrain 'Whence cometh wisdom and where is the place of understanding?' should be inserted before it. But he has thereby created a new difficulty. For the description of mining is now abandoned for the new theme, that the birds and beasts do not know the way to the dwelling-place of Wisdom. How strange then that, after this theme has been developed for a couple of verses, the poet should suddenly swing back to a further description of mining. The difficulty lies to a certain extent against the present arrangement, in so far as these verses, asserting the inaccessibility to the birds and beasts of the mines sunk by man, interrupt the description of mining operations. The present writer would therefore suggest that verses 7, 8 are misplaced. If so, there is no need to insert the refrain before them, they should be simply inserted after it, i. e. they should immediately follow verse 12, where they are admirably in place.

The thought is not merely that, for all the keenness of their vision, the birds of prey or the beasts that hunt their quarry by night have never seen or trodden the way to Wisdom's abode. Birds and animals were supposed to know many things unknown to man, the wisdom of the serpent has, indeed, passed into a proverb. Hence it was not unreasonable for an ancient poet explicitly to rebut the suggestion that the beasts might know the home of Wisdom, since they knew so many of her secrets. But for all their mysterious lore, Wisdom herself lies beyond their reach.

**falcon's:** elsewhere the word is translated 'kite.'

**8. proud beasts:** Heb. 'sons of pride,' so also xli. 34.

Nor hath the fierce lion passed thereby.
9 He putteth forth his hand upon the flinty rock;
He overturneth the mountains by the roots.
10 He cutteth out channels among the rocks;
And his eye seeth every precious thing.
11 He bindeth the streams that they trickle not;
And the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.
12 But where shall wisdom be found?
And where is the place of understanding?
13 Man knoweth not the price thereof;
Neither is it found in the land of the living.
14 The deep saith, It is not in me:
And the sea saith, It is not with me.

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**9.** This and the two following verses, completing the description of mining, follow fairly well on verse 6, it is, however, possible that originally they stood after verse 4, which would give a better sequence.

**10, 11.** Duhm makes the attractive suggestion that 10$^b$ and 11$^a$ should be transposed. The **channels** might be designed to carry off the water, but more probably they are 'passages' (so marg.) drilled through the rock in search of ore or gems.

**that they trickle not:** Heb. 'from weeping,' a vivid phrase, which might well have been put into the text rather than the marg. of the R.V. The reference is to means taken to prevent water from trickling into the mine and rendering it unworkable.

Duhm adds verse 24 here, supposing that it was accidentally removed from its original position to the opposite column. It would suit the context here very well, but the objection to its present position is rather hyper-critical.

**12.** Since in verse 20 the refrain runs 'Whence then cometh wisdom,' &c., it is a plausible suggestion that this was the original text here, and that **be found** has come in from verse 13. On the other hand, the present text is far more suitable to the context. The most inaccessible things are found by man, but where shall wisdom be found? Accordingly the text must be retained, and if uniformity is necessary, verse 20 must be conformed to verse 12. On this verse it is probable that verses 7, 8 originally followed.

**13. the price thereof:** the LXX reads 'the way thereof,' as in verse 23, and is rightly followed by most scholars. 'Price' would suit the description in verses 15–19, but is out of place here.

**14.** Not birds and beasts, nor yet man alone, are unfamiliar with

It cannot be gotten for gold, 15
Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.
It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, 16
With the precious onyx, or the sapphire.
Gold and glass cannot equal it: 17
Neither shall the exchange thereof be jewels of fine gold.
No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal: 18
Yea, the price of wisdom is above rubies.

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the abode of Wisdom. Even the hoary deep, 'that coucheth beneath,' does not possess it, though it waged primaeval warfare with God. The clumsy repetition in the second line of the translation is not found in the Hebrew.

**15.** Bickell, Hatch, Dillmann, and Budde strike out verses 15–20. In this they are partly supported by the LXX, which omits verses 14–19, but on this little stress can be laid. Budde's argument, that we have had the firm substance of the upper earth (verses 1–11), then the deep and the sea (verse 14), now we must have the air (verse 21) and the underworld (verse 22), and therefore that all between verse 14 and verse 21 is an insertion, may be set aside. For we have already seen that the reference to the inability of the fowls of the air to find wisdom has been mentioned in verse 7, and that verse 21 simply sums up the general conclusion from what has been stated. There is more force in the objection that the theme of the chapter is that wisdom cannot be found, while here the thought is of wisdom's incomparable worth. It is not necessary, however, to interpret the verses in this way. The thought is not that wisdom is very precious, but that man cannot procure it. He may procure desirable things by labour or by purchase. But all his labour does not bring him wisdom, for not all the ways he cuts into the treasure-bearing rocks can yield him this treasure. Nor yet can he gain it by purchase, for when he has torn earth's richest treasures from her mines, they will not be of value enough to buy it. It is further urged that it is a bare catalogue of gems, of little poetical worth, and imitated from Prov. iii. 14, 15, viii. 10, 11. It is lost labour to discuss questions of taste, the present writer has a much higher estimate of the poetical beauty of the passage. Possibly the present text has some variants, e.g. $16^a$ and $19^b$, $17^a$ and $19^a$.

**gold:** marg. 'treasure.' The word probably means refined gold.

**16. onyx:** marg. 'beryl.'

**17. jewels:** marg. 'vessels.'

**18. rubies:** marg. 'red coral' or 'pearls.'

19 The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it,
Neither shall it be valued with pure gold.
20 Whence then cometh wisdom?
And where is the place of understanding?
21 Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living,
And kept close from the fowls of the air.
22 Destruction and Death say,
We have heard a rumour thereof with our ears.
23 God understandeth the way thereof,
And he knoweth the place thereof.
24 For he looketh to the ends of the earth,
And seeth under the whole heaven;
25 To make a weight for the wind;

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**20.** Again the urgent question, introducing such answer as the poet can give.

**21.** The reason why the quest is still pursued; the living creatures on earth and the birds that fly above it are alike ignorant of the way (verses 7, 8).

**22. Destruction:** Heb. 'Abaddon,' see note on xxvi. 6. Death and the underworld know as much and as little as the rest of creation. They have heard but a rumour; so the poet himself says of man's knowledge of God, 'How small a whisper do we hear of Him' (xxvi. 14).

**23.** The meaning is not simply that God knows, but that He and no other knows.

**24.** As mentioned above, Duhm places this verse after verse 11. Budde strikes it out. The reason is that the verse expresses the thought that Wisdom has a home on earth, which is revealed to the eye of God. This is supposed to contradict the teaching of the rest of the chapter, that she is not to be found on earth. But perhaps this presses the language unduly. Some connect, as the R.V. apparently does, with verse 25 and thus avoid the difficulty. But more probably verse 25 and verse 26 go closely together.

**25. To make:** marg. 'When he maketh,' but 'When he made' would be better. This and the following verse are a preparation for verse 27. At the time of creation God searched out and established Wisdom.

**a weight for the wind.** God weighed out the due quantity of air for the world. Light though air is, yet its weight is seen to be very real when we experience it in the form of 'wind.'

Yea, he meteth out the waters by measure.
When he made a decree for the rain, 26
And a way for the lightning of the thunder:
Then did he see it, and declare it; 27
He established it, yea, and searched it out.
[M] And unto man he said, 28
Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;
And to depart from evil is understanding.

[A] And Job again took up his parable, and said, **29**

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**26.** The second line is borrowed from xxxviii. 25.

**27. declare:** the meaning may be that God named the name of Wisdom in the sense that He expressed her qualities. The marg. translates 'recount.'

**established:** the meaning is uncertain, perhaps it signifies 'created.'

**28.** Since this stands distinguished from the wisdom spoken of in this chapter in two respects, viz. that it is a religious, not an intellectual thing, and is attainable by man, we must either treat the verse as a later addition, or strain the language to mean, The fear of God is the only wisdom man can attain. It is surprising, after the poet has so emphatically denied wisdom to all but God, that he should speak of the fear of the Lord as wisdom, since that is not possible to God, but only to the creature. All the more when wisdom has been used in the sense of that faculty by which God created the universe, the reason which finds expression in the world, it should be defined as a certain attitude of man to God. If we retain the verse the meaning must be, God has appointed the fear of the Lord as the principle to guide man's ways, in substitution for the principle by which He directs His own.

xxix–xxxi. If Zophar's third speech ended with xxvii. 23, and xxviii is a later insertion, then xxix–xxxi must constitute Job's reply to Zophar. Yet while formally it may be so regarded, really the debate is over. The utmost Zophar can do is to repeat what has already been refuted. Why waste more words on him or his friends? And just as the debate had been preceded by Job's soliloquy in ch. iii, so now it is followed by these chapters, also wholly personal in their character. His former life in God's favour passes before his mind in all its circumstances of happiness, of honour, and of benevolence to others. On this follows the bitter contrast in the present, contempt, pain, and the settled enmity of God. But while God persecutes and men condemn

2 Oh that I were as in the months of old,
As in the days when God watched over me;
3 When his lamp shined upon my head,
And by his light I walked through darkness;
4 As I was in the ripeness of my days,
When the secret of God was upon my tent;

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him, he utters in proud confidence his noble vindication of his past life; his misery may brand him as a sinner, but he will assert his integrity and confront God in consciousness of his innocence.

xxix. 1-6. Job longs that he might once again live as in the old days, when God watched over him and guided his steps, when he was in his ripe age, guarded by God's presence, with his children around him, and abundant prosperity attended him.

xxix. 7-10, 21-25. Then, when he went to the assembly, the young retired abashed from his presence, the aged rose to meet him. The princes ceased to speak and waited for his counsel. His word was final, and men waited for it as eagerly as for the latter rain. His cheerfulness gave them courage and comfort, and his decision was their law.

xxix. 11-17. For those who heard of him blessed him, and those who saw him testified of him, since he helped the poor and the orphan, succoured the perishing and the widow. He was justice incarnate, making good the defects of others, helping the stranger to his rights, smiting the unrighteous and forcing him to let go of his victim.

xxix. 18-20. So he looked forward to long and untroubled life, his root drinking the waters, his branch quickened by the dew, honour and strength for his portion.

xxix. **1.** Probably ran originally 'And Job answered and said.'
**2.** The old fellowship with God he feels to have been real. God's watchfulness was also real, a tender care, not the malignant watchfulness of which he has earlier in the debate complained. He turns with wistful longing to those happier days.

**3. upon:** marg. 'above.'

**4. ripeness of my days:** Heb. 'my days of autumn.' Budde thinks the word could bear an unfavourable sense only, and that the text must be wrong. But this seems unnecessary.

**secret:** marg. 'counsel,' or 'friendship.' The Hebrew is strange; we should probably read, with a slight alteration, 'when God put a hedge about my tent' (cf. i. 10). There is probably an allusion to the Prologue here and in the following verse.

When the Almighty was yet with me, 5
And my children were about me;
When my steps were washed with butter, 6
And the rock poured me out rivers of oil!
When I went forth to the gate unto the city, 7
When I prepared my seat in the street,
The young men saw me and hid themselves, 8
And the aged rose up and stood;
The princes refrained talking, 9
And laid their hand on their mouth;
The voice of the nobles was hushed, 10
And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.
For when the ear heard *me*, then it blessed me; 11
And when the eye saw *me*, it gave witness unto me:
Because I delivered the poor that cried, 12
The fatherless also, that had none to help him.
The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: 13

---

**5.** The companionship of God was his highest good, then the companionship of his children.

**6. rock:** the barren rock yielded him rivers of oil, a strong exaggeration to express the bounty of nature to him. Possibly we should think rather of the oil-presses in the rock, but the sense is tamer, if less hyperbolical. Cf. Deut. xxxii. 13.

**7.** Here Job appears as one who shared in the government of the city, near which his estate would lie. He does not live on a 'ranch,' a life isolated from others of his rank.

**9, 10.** Discussion ceased on Job's arrival, even the highest waiting for his word. Budde seems to be clearly right in the view that verses 21-25 should follow verse 10. The present arrangement breaks off abruptly the description of Job in the assembly.

**hushed:** Heb. 'hid,' but probably the word has been introduced from verse 8 by a slip in place of the original text, which however is no doubt approximately reproduced by the R. V.

**11.** Here Job speaks of his reputation among the people generally on account of his kindness to the suffering and needy.

**12.** Cf. Ps. lxxii. 12. He had not neglected Lazarus at his gate.

And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me:
My justice was as a robe and a diadem.
15 I was eyes to the blind,
And feet was I to the lame.
16 I was a father to the needy:
And the cause of him that I knew not I searched out.
17 And I brake the jaws of the unrighteous,
And plucked the prey out of his teeth.
18 Then I said, I shall die in my nest,
And I shall multiply my days as the sand:
19 My root is spread out to the waters,
And the dew lieth all night upon my branch:
20 My glory is fresh in me,
And my bow is renewed in my hand.
21 Unto me men gave ear, and waited,
And kept silence for my counsel.
22 After my words they spake not again;

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**14. it clothed me:** better as in marg. 'it clothed itself in me,' as we might say, became incarnate in me.

**diadem:** marg. 'turban.'

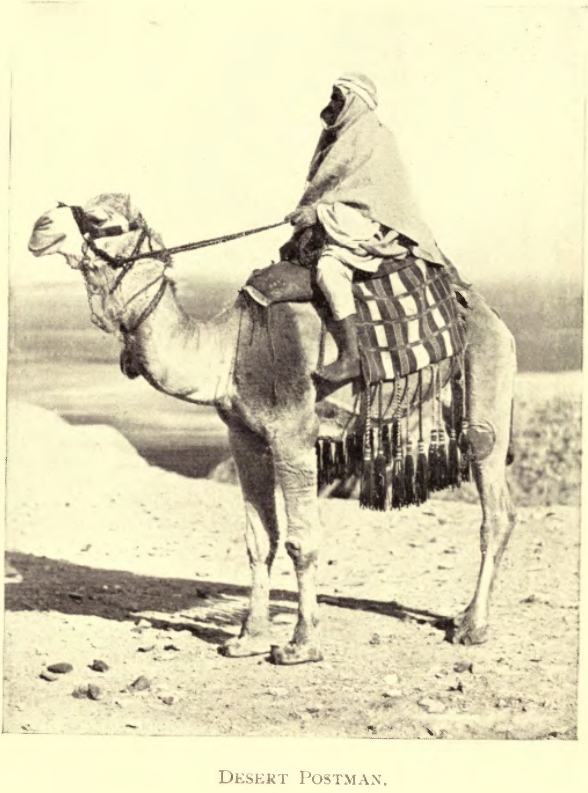
**16.** The translation in the text is to be preferred to the marg. 'the cause which I knew not.'

**18. in:** marg. 'beside,' Heb. 'with.'

**the sand:** rather, as in the marg., 'the phoenix,' the bird which, according to the story told to Herodotus in Egypt, lived five hundred years, and having burnt itself in its nest rose to a new life from the ashes. Hence it was naturally an illustration of very long life. Many scholars translate, however, as in the text.

**19, 20** form a beautiful close to the description, though the present conclusion with verse 25 is also fine.

**21.** As already mentioned, verses 21-25 should follow verse 10. When Job entered the assembly the aged rose in his honour (verse 8), the discussion ceased, even the most distinguished keeping silence (verses 9, 10); they waited till Job had spoken and then felt they could add nothing to his decisive word (verses 21, 22).



DESERT POSTMAN.

And my speech dropped upon them.
And they waited for me as for the rain ; 23
And they opened their mouth wide *as* for the latter
rain.
If I laughed on them, they believed *it* not ; 24
And the light of my countenance they cast not down.
I chose out their way, and sat *as* chief, 25
And dwelt as a king in the army,
As one that comforteth the mourners.

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**22. dropped:** like rain, as the next verse explains. Cf. Deut. xxxii. 2; Isa. lv. 10, 11.

**23.** Cf. Prov. xvi. 15. The latter rain, falling in March and April, is very eagerly anticipated by the farmer, on account of its importance for his crops. Klostermann reads 'like the clods for the latter rain' (cf. Joel i. 17), this is supported by the LXX 'like thirsty ground.'

**24.** The translation in the text yields a sense too overstrained; the great man's smile could hardly seem an incredible favour. The margin gives a much better sense, 'I smiled on them when they had no confidence.' This, however, does not suit the better attested reading (*w$^e$lō* instead of *lō*), which requires either the translation in the text, or 'I laughed on them and they were not confident,' which is the opposite of what we expect. We should probably, with Budde, strike out the negative, 'I laughed on them and they were confident.' The second line means, according to the text, that the dejection of others did not disturb the brightness of Job's outlook. The expression, however, is strange, for while we may speak of casting down the face, we can hardly speak of casting down the light of the face. Bickell, followed by Budde and Duhm, has made the tempting suggestion that we should read 'And the light of my countenance comforted the mourners,' taking the last words from verse 25, where the third line is inappropriate.

**25.** It is not clear whether **their way** means the way which led to them, or the way which they should tread, i. e. their course of action. Since choosing implies the selection between alternative courses, the latter is perhaps to be preferred. If the former is adopted it would probably be better to translate, 'When I chose out the way to them, I sat as chief.' The third line is out of place here, and probably stood for the most part at the end of the preceding verse.

30 But now they that are younger than I have me in
derision,
Whose fathers I disdained to set with the dogs of my flock.

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xxx. 1. Job complains of the derision of those younger than himself, sons of the lowest among the people.

xxx. 2–8. (Probably misplaced portion of description of troglodytes in xxiv. 5 ff.) The strength of their hand fails from famine; they are fed and warmed by the poorest food and fuel, hounded from civilization like thieves, forced to dwell in gloomy valleys and in holes, coupling under the bushes, children of the nameless, scourged from the cultivated soil.

xxx. 9–15. (Following on verse 1.) Job is the subject of their lampoons, and the object of their loathing. God has rendered him unstrung, the victim of unchecked calamities. He is like a city besieged, all ways of escape cut off, with the enemy at last pouring through a breach. He is overwhelmed with terrors, and his welfare is gone.

xxx. 16–31. Now he suffers incessant pain, his body emaciated and swollen. God has thrust him in the mire, and will not hea his cry; He cruelly persecutes him, catches him up in the whirlwind and dissolves him in the storm. He knows that God mean to slay him. Yet the certainty of destruction does not repress hi cry. He wept for the trouble of others. His own hopes hav been blighted. His inward tumult does not cease, he goe mourning, a fit companion of jackals and ostriches. His skin i black and falling off, his bones fevered. His music has turned t wailing.

xxx. **1–8.** According to the present text of verses 1–8 Jol begins the description of the sad reverse of his fortunes witl a bitter complaint that he is mocked by those younger tha himself, sons of men whom he would have scorned to set witl his sheep-dogs. For they were men without vigour and therefor useless to him. Then follows a description of the wretche condition in which the outcasts live. It is possible that scholar generally have been right in accepting this arrangement. Yet i is not easy. It is natural that Job should set against the honour once paid by princes, the mockery he now suffers from outcasts though the tone of disdain in verse 1 is unlike him, one might sa unworthy of him, and leaves a painful impression. But wh should he diverge to explain that they were useless to him Besides, it is not at all clear in what follows whether it is th fathers or the children of whom he is speaking. We naturall suppose that it is the former, and that Job is explaining their lac of vigour by the poverty of their diet and the miserable condition

Yea, the strength of their hands, whereto should it profit 2
  me?
Men in whom ripe age is perished.
They are gaunt with want and famine; 3

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in which they live. When, however, we come to verse 9 we see from comparison with verse 1 that it is the children who have been spoken of; but the transition has not been made plain. Further, were these outcasts, scourged out of society into the wilderness, in a position to venture into the open and insult Job in the manner described? When we look at the passage apart from verse 1, the impression it makes is not one of contempt for their abject condition, but of pity for their misery. Hence the greater part would have been better suited to one of Job's delineations of human wretchedness than to the picture he is painting of his own distress, from which he is diverted at a surprisingly early point. When, lastly, we notice that apparently the same outcasts are introduced here as in xxiv. 5 ff., it is a plausible suggestion that we have here a misplaced section of that description. The objection to the identification, that there they are objects of pity, here of contempt, is, even if true, not decisive, for Job may have regarded them with mingled feelings. But if we detach verse 1, the objection falls away, and even with the present text several scholars think the identification is correct. The present writer is accordingly inclined to believe that originally verses 2-8 or verses 3-8 stood in connexion with xxiv. 5 ff. The first verse may, as Duhm thinks, be an insertion designed to connect these verses with their present context. In that case those who are mentioned in verses 9, 10 as making Job the subject of their lampoons and the object of their insults are those who in earlier days treated him with such respect. This is open to a double objection. It is not likely that those dignified senators would descend to such treatment of Job. Moreover, when xxix. 21-25 has been inserted after xxix. 10 (and Duhm accepts this), the reference to his colleagues is too far away for Job to continue 'And now I am become their song.' Accordingly it seems best to retain verse 1, excusing its disdain by Job's too natural irritation, and, with necessary alteration, let verse 9 immediately follow it.

**2.** According to the text, this verse explains why Job did not employ them; they were too weak to do his work. The offering of an explanation at all is rather surprising, equally so the hard, commercial temper that Job displays. Duhm reads 'Yea, the strength of their hands fails, vigour is perished in them.' In that case this verse belongs to the description of the pariahs.

**ripe age:** better as in marg. 'vigour.'

They gnaw the dry ground, in the gloom of wasteness
and desolation.
4 They pluck salt-wort by the bushes;
And the roots of the broom *are* their meat.
5 They are driven forth from the midst *of men*;
They cry after them as after a thief.
6 In the clefts of the valleys must they dwell,
In holes of the earth and of the rocks.
7 Among the bushes they bray;
Under the nettles they are gathered together.
8 *They are* children of fools, yea, children of base men;

---

3. **They gnaw the dry ground, in,** &c. Much more striking than the marg. 'They flee into the wilderness, into,' &c.

**in the gloom of**: the sense 'gloom' cannot be proved, the marg. gives two alternatives, '*which* yesternight *was*' and 'on the eve of,' the latter is not very intelligible, the former is possible, but the sense is not satisfactory. Some take it '*which* long ago *was*,' but the word cannot well mean this. Many scholars think the text must be corrupt. Duhm reads the word translated xii. 25 'They grope in.' Klostermann, improving on a suggestion of Hoffmann, 'their mother is wasteness and desolation.'

4. **their meat**: since the roots are very bitter, many prefer the marg. 'to warm them.' The roots are often used for fuel in the desert.

5. Thieves they were forced by want to be, as appears from xxiv. 6 (see note). Hence the hue and cry was started if one of them ventured near a civilized community.

6. The dwellings of these wretched troglodytes. We should probably translate as in the marg. 'In the most gloomy valleys,' since these deep, barren ravines, where the sunlight came but little, useless for tillage or pasture, would be the only haunts cheerfully abandoned to them. These martyrs of civilization, like the heroes of faith, 'wandered in deserts and mountains and caves, and the holes of the earth.'

7. They have already been compared to wild-asses xxiv. 5. The verse may refer to their gatherings, where their speech, loud and rough, reminds more cultured ears of the braying of an ass. The marg. translates 'stretch themselves.' We should perhaps render 'under the nettles they couple,' misbegetting as they were themselves misbegotten (verse 8); in this case 'bray' must be explained in the light of Jer. v. 8. **nettles**: marg. 'wild vetches.'

8. They are a feeble-witted folk, a horde of nameless ancestry,

They were scourged out of the land.
9 And now I am become their song,
Yea, I am a byword unto them.
10 They abhor me, they stand aloof from me,
And spare not to spit in my face.
11 For he hath loosed his cord, and afflicted me,

---

driven with blows from the cultivated land into the desert. The second line reads according to the marg. 'They are outcasts from the land.'

**base men:** Heb. '*men of* no name.'

**9.** This verse connects immediately with verse 1, only we should obviously not read 'But now,' which has become necessary after the insertion of verses 2-8. If any word should be read in place of 'now,' it might be the first person singular or third personal plural pronoun, 'And I, 'tis I have become their song,' or 'And 'tis their song that I have become.' It is not likely that the dull outcasts described in the preceding verses composed and sang these stinging lampoons about Job. It is the base rabble that formed the lowest stratum of the society in which Job lived, sharp-witted in pungent satire as our street-arabs, and as remorseless to their butts.

**10. in my face:** if they kept their distance, they could hardly spit in his face. We might translate 'before me,' i.e. they do not respect the conventional decencies in my presence. But was it considered unbecoming? Better, as in the marg., 'at the sight of me,' i.e. in sign of their loathing.

**11.** The text at this point begins to be in great disorder, and the sense is very doubtful. The root of the difficulty is largely to be found in the uncertainty whether Job is describing the conduct of those to whom he has just referred, or whether it is God's attack on him of which he is speaking. In this verse the singular and plural occur, 'he' in one line and 'they' in the next. The difficulty is further complicated by the uncertainty whether we should read **his cord,** or as in the marg. 'my cord,' and whether further we should not render 'bowstring' instead of 'cord.' The following verses also contain much that is obscure. On the whole, the present writer prefers to take the verses 11-15 as referring not to the attacks of the tormentors of verses 1, 9-10, but to God's assaults upon him by the hosts of misfortune He sends against him. The passage is very like xvi. 7-14, xix. 12, and this should probably control the interpretation here.

**loosed his cord:** the most obvious meaning of the words is that the unnamed subject has taken off the cord of his girdle to

And they have cast off the bridle before me.
12 Upon my right hand rise the rabble;
They thrust aside my feet,
And they cast up against me their ways of destruction.
13 They mar my path,
They set forward my calamity,
*Even* men that have no helper.
14 As through a wide breach they come:

---

chastise Job with it, but it is not easy to think that this could be said with reference to God, nor would the substitution of 'my cord' for **his cord** help matters. Rather we should have to read the first person, but render 'my bowstring'; then the complaint that God has relaxed his bowstring is the antithesis to xxix. 20, 'and my bow is renewed in my hand.' If the text of the second line is retained, the meaning should then be that in consequence of this action of God, which has made him like a bow unstrung, his tormentors cast off all restraint, though some think it is the hosts of misfortune that have thus cast off restraint. It is possible to refer the first line to the tormentors, the singular individualizing them one by one, but it would be better in that case to read 'they have loosed.'

**12.** The translation **rabble** fixes the reference to the tormentors. The marg. renders 'brood,' which admits a reference to the hosts of misfortune. Since the metaphor in the verse is that of a siege, the words 'upon my right hand' seem hardly suitable, as they would be if the figure were that of a law court, in which the accuser stood at the right hand. We should have expected it to be balanced by 'at the left hand.' It is simplest to read 'Against me,' and omit these words in the third line. The second line has no very intelligible meaning. The word translated 'thrust aside' is the same as that rendered 'they have cast off,' probably the line has arisen through dittography of 'they have cast off the bridle,' and should be struck out. The third line represents them as casting up a way by which they may more effectually carry the fortress by storm and destroy it (cf. xix. 12).

**13. mar:** marg. 'break up,' apparently paths of escape, though some think the way of life is meant.

**set forward:** they help on his ruin; the word is not elsewhere used like this.

The third line should probably be emended, and we should read with Dillmann and others, 'there is none to restrain them.'

**14.** The fortress is stormed, and the enemy pour in through a

In the midst of the ruin they roll themselves *upon me.*
Terrors are turned upon me, 15
They chase mine honour as the wind;
And my welfare is passed away as a cloud.
And now my soul is poured out within me; 16
Days of affliction have taken hold upon me.
In the night season my bones are pierced in me, 17
And the *pains* that gnaw me take no rest.
By the great force *of my disease* is my garment disfigured : 18

---

breach in the walls. This is better than the marg. 'As a wide breaking in *of waters.*'

**15. They chase:** marg. 'thou chasest,' but the word might be pointed as a passive, 'is chased.' Duhm by a slight change gets the sense 'is driven away,' and also corrects the word rendered 'mine honour'(marg. 'my nobility') to 'my happiness' to secure a parallel with the next line.

**17. pierced in me:** *lit.* 'pierced from upon me,' which seems to mean, pierced so that they fall from me. The marg. renders 'corroded *and drop* away from me.' The line is rather long, Budde strikes out 'in the night season,' Duhm 'in me.' It is possible that the reference to the night was introduced in blundering contrast to 'days of affliction' (verse 16).

**the *pains* that gnaw me:** *lit.* 'my gnawers,' the sense is correctly given by R.V., though some have thought of the worms in his sores (vii. 5) that were never still. The marg. renders 'my sinews take no rest.'

**18.** The verse as it stands in the text is very strangely expressed. The reference in **great force** is uncertain, whether of his disease or whether of God (so marg. 'By *his* great force'). Then what is the sense of the first line? Does it mean that under the afflicting hand of God, or the violence of his pain, Job twists his clothes out of shape? or that the discharge from his ulcers saturated his clothes, so that they stuck to him? or that the emaciation of his body made his clothes hang all out of shape on him? Some again take the **garment** as a metaphor for his skin. The poet is probably not responsible for the barely-intelligible text. Budde's emendation 'my flesh' for **my garment** does not suit the second line well, and leaves the ambiguity of 'great force' where it was. Since the line is probably intended to express the emaciation caused by his disease, Duhm's excellent emendation, 'By reason of great wasting my garment is crumpled together,' gives the needed sense with slight alteration (for *kōach yithḥappēs*

It bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.
19 He hath cast me into the mire,
And I am become like dust and ashes.
20 I cry unto thee, and thou dost not answer me:
I stand up, and thou lookest at me.
21 Thou art turned to be cruel to me:
With the might of thy hand thou persecutest me.
22 Thou liftest me up to the wind, thou causest me to ride *upon it*;
And thou dissolvest me in the storm.

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he reads *kaḥash yithhabbē'*. The *Shin* was transferred from the end of the first to the end of the second word). The second line means that his garment clings to him like a vest. The translation **collar of my coat** suggests close-fitting strongly to us, but the opening of the Oriental undergarment was large enough for the head to go through it. The phrase so rendered may simply mean 'like my vest.' It is not clear whether this line also refers to his emaciation. But the garment would surely hang loosely on his shrunken body, so that we should perhaps suppose that here the reference is to the abnormal swelling of other parts of the body which makes his garment fit tight to these.

**18.** The verse may describe the appearance of Job's skin, which is as if he had been rolled in the mire, or it may be a figurative expression for his deep humiliation.

**19.** This verse is important for its bearing on the questions raised by xxvii. 7–10. In the second line we should have expected 'thou lookest not at me,' and some read this. Still, Job may be thinking of God's malicious regard. The Syriac, followed by several, reads 'Thou standest,' and this gives a finer sense. While Job cries God will not listen, but stands looking at him with a cruel smile. Duhm by a slight change gets the sense 'thou ceasest to regard me' (*lit.* 'standest still from,' cf. Gen. xxix. 35).

**21.** Ley cuts out this verse as inconsistent with verse 20 and with the religious standpoint which Job has reached. Both reasons seem to the present writer incorrect.

**22.** God has given him to be the sport of the whirlwind, which has seized and borne him on high, till he is torn to pieces amid the howling of the storm. The Hebrew marg. reads for **storm** (*lit.* 'roar') the word translated in vi. 13 'effectual working.' If this is adopted we should probably follow the LXX and insert a single consonant and read 'without' before the noun, translating

For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, 23
And to the house appointed for all living.
Surely against a ruinous heap he will not put forth his hand; 24
Though *it be* in his destruction, *one may utter* a cry because of these things.
Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? 25
Was not my soul grieved for the needy?
When I looked for good, then evil came; 26
And when I waited for light, there came darkness.
My bowels boil, and rest not; 27
Days of affliction are come upon me.
I go mourning without the sun: 28

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'without help.' The text, however, is finer, and must not be prosaically niggled at.

**23. bring me:** *lit.* 'bring me back.' Duhm accordingly points 'make me dwell'; but cf. 'naked shall I return thither,' i. 21. The second line is translated in the marg. 'And to the house of meeting for all living.'

**24.** The verse is translated in the marg. 'Howbeit doth not one stretch out the hand in his fall? or in his calamity therefore cry for help?' This is probably near the meaning, but the Hebrew is strange, though not, as Siegfried thinks, 'entirely void of sense.' It would be much better, adopting a suggestion of Dillmann, to read 'Howbeit doth not a sinking man stretch out the hand?' (*tōbē'a* for *b*$^{e}$*'ī*.) The second line reads with a slight correction 'or doth he not in his calamity cry for help.' Job means that while his fate is settled (verse 23), it is still natural that he should cry for help, just as a drowning man might do, though in his heart of hearts he knew it to be vain. The translation in the text is a pitiful plea that God should not smite one so stricken already; the second line excuses the cry he utters, but is not very clear. Ley thinks it is a complaint that God does not destroy him outright, but keeps him lingering in pain.

**25.** I wept for the sorrow of others, why should I not then for my own? Duhm thinks the verse continues the thought of verse 24 and substitutes the third person, 'Or does he not weep who is in trouble, Is not the soul of the needy grieved?'

**26.** I may well complain when all my hopes are blighted.

**27.** The unresting turmoil of inward emotions.

**28.** The marg. 'I go blackened, but not by the sun' is perhaps

I stand up in the assembly, and cry for help.
29 I am a brother to jackals,
And a companion to ostriches.
30 My skin is black, *and falleth* from me,
And my bones are burned with heat.
31 Therefore is my harp *turned* to mourning,
And my pipe into the voice of them that weep.

**31** I made a covenant with mine eyes;

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a better translation of the present text (cf. Song of Songs i. 6 and Byron's 'My hair is grey, Though not with years'). The crust which forms in ecthyma is black (see note on ii. 7). But the translation 'go mourning' is to be preferred, and the words 'without the sun' corrected. Duhm, followed by Ley, by the insertion of a single consonant gets the excellent sense 'I go mourning without comfort' (*n*$^{e}$*ḥāmāh* for *ḥammah*). The second line is strange, what 'assembly' is meant? Duhm emends brilliantly 'I stand up in the assembly of jackals' (*shū'āl*). This suits the next verse. The word translated by him 'jackals' is that so translated in the marg. of Judges xv. 4, where 'foxes' stands in the text, in the story of Samson firing the Philistines' corn. The reference is to the wailing cry uttered by these animals.

**29. jackals:** a different word from that read by Duhm in verse 28. He translates here 'wolves'; the meaning is not precisely known. For the 'ostrich' cf. xxxix. 13, and for the cry of both Mic. i. 8.

**30.** Symptoms of his disease.

xxxi. 1–4. Job had pledged himself against evil desires of the eyes, for the all-seeing God rewarded evil doers with disaster.

xxxi. 5–8. If he had been guilty of falsehood (a fair trial would prove his integrity), if he has yielded to covetousness, let others enjoy the fruit of his labours.

xxxi. 9–12. If he has been guilty of adultery, let his wife be the slave and concubine of another, for the crime is heinous and leads to ruin.

xxxi. 13–23. If he had trampled on justice, when his slaves had a complaint against him, how could he answer God, who made them as well as him? If he has dealt unkindly with the poor, the widow and the orphan (though God had nurtured him from his birth), if he has not clothed the starving, if he has oppressed the orphan, relying on his influence with the judges, let his arm be

How then should I look upon a maid?
For what *is* the portion of God from above, 2
And the heritage of the Almighty from on high?

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broken. For he had been terror-smitten at the thought of God's vengeance.

xxxi. 24–34. If he trusted in wealth; if he secretly yielded to idolatry, this would be a sin to be punished by the judges. If he rejoiced at the downfall of his foe (nay, he had not suffered himself to seek his destruction by a curse), if he had not been hospitable, if he had committed any sins he needed to hide.

xxxi. 35–37. Oh that one would hear him! Let God answer him, let him have His accusation, proudly would he enter His presence with it, and declare to Him all his ways.

xxxi. 38–40. If his land cry out against him, because he has robbed its fruits or gained it by killing the owner, let it bring forth thorns and weeds instead of corn.

xxxi. **1.** The chapter begins abruptly, but it would be no improvement to follow the LXX, with some scholars, and strike out verses 1–4. For verse 5 would form a much more abrupt beginning, and against the view that verses 1–4 have been substituted for the original introduction we may set the impression of originality that they make. It is, however, most surprising that Job should begin with a very special type of sin, and further should give as his reason for avoiding it so general a principle as that in verse 3. We should rather expect a very general term for sin to stand at the beginning. The present writer would therefore suggest that the second line ran originally 'How then should I look upon folly'? (*n$^e$bālāh* for *b$^e$thūlāh*). We might compare 'Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.' If the text be retained we may compare Matt. v. 28. With Job's large number of slaves the temptation, as history proves, was terribly real. Not only does he refrain from actual seduction, he will not even suffer himself to give way to longing. The inwardness of this morality is quite in keeping with the rest of the chapter, but for the reason already given it is questionable whether the text is right.

**2.** It seems at first strange that Job should in the midst of his own calamities give as the reason for refraining from sin that disaster is sent by God on the evil-doer. But it would be very hazardous to infer from this that verses 2–4 must be a later insertion, for Job is speaking from the standpoint he occupied before his troubles. These were the thoughts that then weighed with him. The marg. reads 'For what portion *should I have* of God . . . and what heritage, &c.? Is there not calamity, &c.?'

3 Is it not calamity to the unrighteous,
And disaster to the workers of iniquity?
4 Doth not he see my ways,
And number all my steps?
5 If I have walked with vanity,
And my foot hath hasted to deceit;
6 (Let me be weighed in an even balance,
That God may know mine integrity;)
7 If my step hath turned out of the way,
And mine heart walked after mine eyes,
And if any spot hath cleaved to mine hands:
8 Then let me sow, and let another eat;
Yea, let the produce of my field be rooted out.
9 If mine heart have been enticed unto a woman,
And I have laid wait at my neighbour's door:
10 Then let my wife grind unto another,
And let others bow down upon her.
11 For that were an heinous crime;
Yea, it were an iniquity to be punished by the judges:
12 For it is a fire that consumeth unto Destruction,

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**3.** Ley places this between verses 13 and 15.

**5. vanity:** i.e. falsehood.

**6.** If he is weighed in a true balance he will not be found wanting (cf. Dan. v. 27).

**7.** The stepping from the path of life intended seems from the second line to have been coveting what was not his own.

**8. the produce of my field:** this gives correctly the sense of the Heb. 'my produce.' The marg. gives 'my offspring,' but obviously this is not the meaning.

**10. grind:** the slave-woman who ground at the mill held the lowest position of all; cf. Exod. xi. 5, 'from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maid-servant that is behind the mill.' The second line imprecates retribution in kind, but we need not, as many have done, impose that sense on the first. A good parallel is Isa. xlvii. 2; we might also compare the vengeance on Samson, Judges xvi. 21.

**12. Destruction:** Heb. 'Abaddon,' see xxvi. 6. For **root out,**

And would root out all mine increase.
If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my 13
maidservant,
When they contended with me :
What then shall I do when God riseth up ? 14
And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him ?
Did not he that made me in the womb make him ? 15
And did not one fashion us in the womb ?
If I have withheld the poor from *their* desire, 16
Or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail ;
Or have eaten my morsel alone, 17
And the fatherless hath not eaten thereof ;
(Nay, from my youth he grew up with me as with a father, 18
And I have been her guide from my mother's womb ;)
If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, 19
Or that the needy had no covering ;
If his loins have not blessed me, 20

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which does not well suit the metaphor of fire, Duhm reads 'burn up' (*tisrōph* for $t^e$*shārēsh*).

**13–15.** He had not, with the contemptuous cynicism of might, thrust aside the cause of his slaves, when they had a case to urge against him. How could he have stood before God's bar and defended such conduct ? For God was the maker of both, the right of the slave was as much to Him as Job's right, a most remarkable advance on the ethics of antiquity, even in Israel. Possibly verse 14 should, as Duhm suggests, be placed before verse 18, which at present follows abruptly after verse 17.

**16.** marg. 'If I have withheld aught that the poor desired.'

**to fail** with unfulfilled longing, when I might have helped her.

**18.** The first line is surprising, though Job may quite early in life have taken up the position of patron of the helpless and needy. The second line, however, is too strong an exaggeration. An infant guiding the widow can hardly be the picture intended. We should much more probably read, with several scholars, 'For from my youth like a father He caused me to grow up, And was my guide from my mother's womb ;' i. e. God had cared for him from infancy to manhood, he in return must care for the weak, cf. Ps. xxii. 9, 10.

And if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep ;
21 If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless,
Because I saw my help in the gate :
22 Then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder blade,
And mine arm be broken from the bone.
23 For calamity from God was a terror to me,
And by reason of his excellency I could do nothing.
24 If I have made gold my hope,
And have said to the fine gold, *Thou art* my confidence ;
25 If I rejoiced because my wealth was great,
And because mine hand had gotten much ;
26 If I beheld the sun when it shined,
Or the moon walking in brightness ;
27 And my heart hath been secretly enticed,

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**21.** Job had not oppressed the fatherless, though he knew that he could win his case if he were tried for violence in the courts. Possibly we should read 'against the blameless' (so Duhm), since it is rather strange to find the orphan mentioned again.

**22.** The punishment of the offending member ; cf. Cranmer at the stake, and the descriptions of penalties in the next world, which have frequently been constructed on this principle.

**23.** Perhaps out of place after the imprecation, but it is not very suitable after verse 14 (Bickell), or verse 28 (Duhm).

**26.** As one of the 'sons of the East,' Job had a powerful temptation to worship the heavenly bodies, which from the time of Manasseh had also been a serious peril to the Jews. **the sun** is literally 'the light,' but probably the sun is meant, though the term might have a wider application. The moon moving in stately splendour across the wonderful Eastern sky is so majestic a spectacle that the thrill of homage it inspired is not hard to understand. But Job's heart was so right with God that even this fascination did not cast on him its deadly spell.

**27.** The old chords were in his nature to respond to the touch of the old faith. Outwardly a monotheist, he yet knew the seductiveness of this worship. (Cf. Grant Allen's story *The Reverend John Creedy*, also *The Beckoning Hand.*) But he sternly held it at bay, and would not, while upholding his rigid monotheism before the world, indulge the unholy hankering with a furtive act of compliance.

And my mouth hath kissed my hand:
This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judges: 28
For I should have lied to God that is above.
If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, 29
Or lifted up myself when evil found him;
(Yea, I suffered not my mouth to sin 30
By asking his life with a curse;)
If the men of my tent said not, 31
Who can find one that hath not been satisfied with his flesh?
The stranger did not lodge in the street; 32
But I opened my doors to the traveller;

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The second line is literally 'and my hand hath kissed my mouth.' This strange form is chosen because the hand is the main instrument in the act, first it touches the lips to receive the kiss, then wafts the kiss to the object of worship. The kiss of homage was given to images by the worshipper, and, of course, 'thrown' to such deities as the distant heavenly bodies.

**28.** Idolatry was made by Deuteronomy a crime to be punished by death (Deut. xvii. 2-7). For **lied to God** the marg. gives 'denied God.'

**29.** One of the most beautiful traits in the whole picture, standing out against the unlovely background of not a little in the O. T.

**30.** The curse was supposed to have an inherent magical force which brought about its fulfilment. **Mouth** is properly 'palate,' the organ of taste; the suggestion is that the cursing of a foe is a dainty delicious morsel, but Job would not gratify his palate with it.

**31.** Job's hospitality was acknowledged by his retainers to be extended to every one. But the more obvious rendering is, Would that one were not satisfied with his flesh! which seems to mean, would that we might still gratify his hospitality by finding some one who had not yet partaken of his bounty! The wish-formula is literally 'who will give.' Duhm strikes out the words 'will give' and gets the sense 'Who is not satisfied with his flesh!' The marg. renders as A. V. 'Oh, that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied,' but this yields no suitable sense.

**32. the traveller:** Heb. 'the way.' But with a different pointing the sense is 'traveller.'

33 If like Adam I covered my transgressions,
By hiding mine iniquity in my bosom ;
34 Because I feared the great multitude,
And the contempt of families terrified me,
So that I kept silence, and went not out of the door—
35 Oh that I had one to hear me !
(Lo, here is my signature, let the Almighty answer me ;)
And *that I had* the indictment which mine adversary hath
written !

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**33. like Adam:** better as marg. 'after the manner of men.' The reference to Adam is not specially appropriate to concealment of sin from men, and explicit references to the sacred history are avoided in the book. A slight change would give 'among men.' The verses mean that his life had been so upright that he had nothing of which to be ashamed or that might give him just cause to dread the fury of the populace. Hence he did not need to keep close at home, but could fearlessly mingle among men and look all his fellows in the face.

**35.** Profoundly stirred by the solemn assertion that he had always kept a conscience void of offence, his soul lifts itself to this splendid impassioned utterance, which worthily closes the human debate. He cries that God should answer him and give him the book in which the charges against him were written. Proudly he would lift it on his shoulder, nay, place it as a crown on his head, and thus crowned as a prince he would meet God face to face, and in conscious innocence lay bare before Him all the acts of his life.

**Oh that I had one to hear me:** generally it is thought that God is intended, and this harmonizes with Job's wish elsewhere and the challenge in the next line. Yet it is quite possible that it is for a sympathetic human ear that he is longing, to which he may entrust the declaration he is about to make.

**signature:** Heb. 'mark,' the sign which he appended to his assertion of innocence, not to his indictment of God, to which no reference is made in this passage. To this formally attested document he summons the Almighty to reply.

Since the third line is without a parallel, it is possible that a line has fallen out before it, Duhm suggests 'Oh that I had the roll.' It is usually thought that Job expresses the wish that he had the indictment (Heb. 'book') drawn up against him by his Divine adversary. The term used for 'adversary' is literally 'man of my strife,' and if the reference be to God, we must

Surely I would carry it upon my shoulder ; 36
I would bind it unto me as a crown.
I would declare unto him the number of my steps ; 37
As a prince would I go near unto him.
If my land cry out against me, 38
And the furrows thereof weep together ;

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suppose that the phrase has come to mean simply 'opponent,' the idea expressed in 'man' having fallen out of consciousness (just as we may speak of a woman as a Bachelor of Arts). Ley thinks only a man can be intended, and that the text would mean 'my advocate,' but deletes the word 'my strife' as a gloss on 'book.' Hoonacker, who supposes an inversion in the order of the lines (see for his view of the passage *Révue Biblique*, April, 1903), thinks that we cannot suppose Job to have braved God, by defiantly entering His presence, with His indictment worn as a mark of distinction. Accordingly he argues that it is a human adversary, whose indictment of him Job desires, and into whose presence he would proudly enter bearing it. But while it would be too much to say that this is impossible, it is nevertheless improbable that Job should in the very climax of his defence think of any human opponent, whose accusation he would wear as a trophy and to whom he would vindicate his ways. If elsewhere he has insisted that it is with God, not with man, that he is concerned, here in the supreme moment, when he gathers himself together for his last great utterance, it is God alone whom he would confront. Defiant the tone may be, but why should the poet have shrunk from letting his hero brave God, in proud assurance of his integrity? It is no emasculated pietist whom he has chosen for his protagonist in this titanic struggle.

**36.** Some explain that Job would thus proudly wear it, because it could contain nothing against him. But is it not far finer and more impressive if he means an indictment corresponding to his suffering, that God should say of him in word what He had said of him in act? He would bind God's accusations to him, transfiguring the shame into glory by the radiant glow of conscious innocence. Never had his independence of all approval save that of his own conscience reached a height more sublime.

**37. go near unto him:** marg. 'present it *to him*,' but the text is to be preferred.

**38.** It is disastrous that after the splendid close in verses 35–37 a dislocation of verses should have brought verses 38–40 into their present position, where they ruin the effect. With very few exceptions, scholars are agreed that originally they stood in a different part of the chapter, and probably through

39 If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money,
Or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life :
40 Let thistles grow instead of wheat,
And cockle instead of barley.

The words of Job are ended.

**32** [**B**] So these three men ceased to answer Job, because

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accidental omission by a copyist from their original place, were put at the end of the chapter. Very different views have been held as to the position which they held, and they have been inserted after verses 8, 12, 15, 23, 25, 32 and 34. The point is not worth discussing. The 'cry of the land' is most naturally referred to the cry of the blood of the former owners, shed by Job (verse 39), as the blood of Naboth might be supposed to cry for vengeance on Ahab, who had despoiled him of his vineyard by murder. The imprecation in verse 40 seems rather slight for the offence, but the story of Cain supplies a rather striking parallel. Not only does his brother's blood cry from the ground, but he is in consequence 'cursed from the ground,' and therefore, when he tills the ground, it will not yield its strength to him, which (comparing Gen. iii. 17, 18) seems to mean much the same as verse 40. Duhm strikes out verse 39 as an incorrect explanation, and supposes the cry of the ground to be prompted by some wrong done to it, e. g. neglect of proper rest, or sowing with two kinds of seed (Lev. xix. 19). The grounds for eliminating verse 39 seem, however, to be inadequate.

**39. fruits :** Heb. 'strength.'

**40.** For **thistles** the marg. gives 'thorns,' and 'noisome weeds' for **cockle.**

**The words of Job are ended :** a later addition. Budde, however, follows the LXX in connecting the clause closely with xxxii. 1. 'The words of Job were ended, and these three men,' &c.

Ley thinks the contents of the chapter have been seriously disarranged. His reconstruction is very ingenious, but involves more transposition than can well be justified. It may be seen in his *Das Buch Hiob*, pp. 89–92.

xxxii. At this point we have six chapters inserted, containing a contribution to the debate by Elihu, a juvenile speaker, whose presence comes on the reader as a complete surprise, since he has not before been mentioned, and the supposed references in the previous speeches to an audience listening to the discussion are he was righteous in his own eyes. Then was kindled the 2

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purely imaginary. He is introduced in a prolix manner, quite unlike that found in the prose narrative. If the speeches of Elihu were regarded as genuine, it would be a probable suggestion that verses 2-5 should be regarded as a later insertion, since it would be hard to think of the author composing anything so intolerably diffuse. Four times we are informed that Elihu's wrath was kindled. But when it is recognized that the speeches are a later addition, there is no temptation to strike out verses 2-5, which there is no difficulty in assigning to the author of these speeches. Besides, some explanation of Elihu's presence is due to the reader. The poetical accentuation has been continued in verses 1-6, though they are in prose.

xxxii. 1-5. The friends ceased to argue, for Job was immovably self-righteous. Elihu was angry with Job for making himself out to be more righteous than God, and with the friends for their failure to refute Job. He had not previously intervened, because the three friends were older, but when they could not continue the debate he was angry.

xxxii. 6-14. Elihu explains his silence by his youth, for he thought age should be wise. But this is not so, for wisdom comes by Divine inspiration, so they should hearken to him. He had listened to them, but none convinced Job. Let them not despair because Job is too wise for them, and God alone can vanquish him. For Job has still to debate with him, and he will not use their pointless weapons.

xxxii. 15-22. The friends are dumb, must he therefore be silent? No, he is full of words, and like bottles which must have vent or burst under the force of the fermenting wine, he must speak to find relief from the intolerable pressure. He will speak without respect of persons; fear of the Almighty will secure him from flattery.

**1.** The friends continued the debate no longer, because they felt it to be useless since Job was immovably entrenched in his self-complacency. The poet himself could hardly have written this, for as plainly as possible the last three chapters were intended by him to bring the human debate to an end and let God answer Job. The LXX and Syriac, followed by Geiger, read 'because he was righteous in their eyes,' i. e. Job had convinced them of his righteousness. This is clearly incorrect, especially if xxvii. 7-23 formed part of Zophar's last speech.

**2.** The poet does not even tell us the name of Job's father, much less those of the friends, the supplementer tells us the name of his hero's father, and his family. The names of Elihu (he is

wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the
family of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, be-
3 cause he justified himself rather than God. Also against
his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had
4 found no answer, and yet had condemned Job. Now
Elihu had waited to speak unto Job, because they were
5 elder than he. And when Elihu saw that there was no
answer in the mouth of these three men, his wrath was
kindled.

6 And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered
and said,

I am young, and ye are very old;

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my God) and his father (God blesses) are clearly not traditional names like the rest; and Ram, which means 'the exalted,' may similarly have been invented; it occurs nowhere else except Ruth iv. 19, 1 Chron. ii. 9, 10 as son of Hezron and brother of Jerahmeel, and in verse 25 as a son of Jerahmeel, and cannot be safely regarded as an abbreviation of Aram (Syria). Buz was a Nahorite clan, represented in Gen. xxii. 21 as a brother of Uz, therefore Elihu and Job were of closely related stocks. But in Jer. xxv. 23 it occurs in connexion with the Arabian tribes Dedan and Tema. It is, however, a very curious fact, pointed out by Hoffmann, that in xxxi. 34 we have in the words 'the contempt of families' almost the precise words here translated **the Buzite, of the family of Ram** (Buz means 'contempt').

**rather than God:** some translate 'before God,' but the meaning is probably that Job by the assertions of his own innocence and attacks on God's character and government made himself out to be more righteous than God. We are at a different stage from that in iv. 17, in the interval Job's criticism of God has come.

**3.** The text seems rather to mean that they had found no answer with which to condemn Job, such answers as they had made being inadequate to their purpose. The Jewish tradition is that the original text was 'condemned God.' The meaning would then be that by their failure to reply effectively to Job's assaults on God they virtually condemned Him. However little they desired this, it was the result that emerged from the debate.

**4.** *lit.* 'waited for Job with words.'

**6.** Cf. xii. 12. Elihu is little troubled by his modesty in the sequel, he more than makes up for his bashful silence.

Wherefore I held back, and durst not shew you mine opinion.
I said, Days should speak, 7
And multitude of years should teach wisdom.
But there is a spirit in man, 8
And the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding.
It is not the great that are wise, 9
Nor the aged that understand judgement.
Therefore I said, Hearken to me; 10
I also will shew mine opinion.
Behold, I waited for your words, 11
I listened for your reasons,
Whilst ye searched out what to say.
Yea, I attended unto you, 12
And, behold, there was none that convinced Job,
Or that answered his words, among you.

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**8.** If the reference is to the common possession of the spirit by man, the thought seems to be that the breath of God by which men live is the source also of their understanding. But while this is apparently the meaning of the text, it is hardly that required by the argument. This is rather that Elihu, though young, is wise because he speaks by a Divine inspiration, in which the friends, though old, have no share. A slight change is made by Duhm, who thus gets the sense 'But the spirit enlighteneth man,' cf. for the two parallel verbs Ps. cxix. 130. This is better than Bickell's suggestion that we should read 'spirit of God' for 'spirit,' since this again suggests something common to men generally.

**9.** Budde places verses 13, 14 between verses 9 and 10, and strikes out 11, 12, 15-17. Hatch omitted 11-17. Duhm omits 10, and places 15-17 between 9 and 11. It is to be noticed that $10^b$ is identical with $17^b$, and that $10^a$ and $17^a$ are also much alike in sense.

**10. said:** marg. 'say.'

**11, 12.** Elihu had closely watched the development of the debate, and had to confess how unconvincing were the arguments of the friends. Possibly the meaning is that he had waited for arguments that never came.

13 Beware lest ye say, We have found wisdom;
God may vanquish him, not man:
14 For he hath not directed his words against me;
Neither will I answer him with your speeches.
15 They are amazed, they answer no more:
They have not a word to say.
16 And shall I wait, because they speak not,
Because they stand still, and answer no more?
17 I also will answer my part,
I also will shew mine opinion.
18 For I am full of words;
The spirit within me constraineth me.
19 Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent;
Like new bottles it is ready to burst.

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**13.** The friends may excuse their inability to vanquish Job by the wisdom they have discovered in him; too clever for men to refute, all that can be done is to leave him to God. No need to call in God, is Elihu's retort, I am quite equal to the task of overcoming him. The verse is a direct polemic against the poet, a strong assertion that the Divine speeches which follow had been better omitted. Fortunately the author could not suppress them. The marg. renders with A. V. 'Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom; God thrusteth him down, not man: now he,' &c. But this yields no very satisfactory sense.

**14.** You need not give up the conflict as lost, for he has still to debate with me, and I shall not use the arguments that have proved such useless weapons in your hands. His promise is ill-kept.

**15.** Spoken of the friends in the third person, the soliloquy being more contemptuous than direct address, cf. Isa. xxii. 16, and just on that ground all the less to be struck out.

**16.** That they can say nothing is no reason why I should be silent.

**18-20.** Elihu's conceit would be less insufferable to an Oriental than to us; but it goes far beyond anything in the other speeches. He has all the time been bottling up his words; he is like new wine-skins, in which the wine is fermenting and which must get vent or burst.

**within me**: *lit.* 'of my belly.'

**it is ready**: marg. 'which are ready.'

I will speak, that I may be refreshed ; 20
I will open my lips and answer.
Let me not, I pray you, respect any man's person ; 21
Neither will I give flattering titles unto any man.
For I know not to give flattering titles ; 22
*Else* would my Maker soon take me away.
  Howbeit, Job, I pray thee, hear my speech, **33**
And hearken to all my words.
Behold now, I have opened my mouth, 2
My tongue hath spoken in my mouth.

---

**be refreshed :** marg. 'find relief.'

**21.** The parade of impartiality is quite sincerely meant.

xxxiii. 1–7. Elihu invites Job to hear his sincere words and answer if he can. He is like Job a creature of God's hands, and therefore cannot overwhelm him with the terror of Divine majesty.

xxxiii. 8–13. Job has affirmed his innocence and accused God of hostility, but unjustly. Why does he complain that God will not answer him?

xxxiii. 14–18. For God answers man in two ways. First, by dreams and night visions, to withhold man from courses that lead to destruction.

xxxiii. 19–30. Another of God's ways is when sore illness brings a man near to death, and the destroying angels are ready to take away his life. If one of the thousand angels, set apart for the purpose, instructs him, and graciously intercedes for him and provides a ransom, then he is restored to perfect health. He renews his communion with God, and proclaims before men his own sin and God's grace. Such are God's ways of saving man from destruction.

xxxiii. 31–33. Let Job listen in silence to Elihu's further utterances, though if he has anything to urge in self-defence Elihu will willingly listen to him. Otherwise let him be silent and learn wisdom from Elihu.

**1.** Elihu, unlike the other speakers, frequently addresses Job by name. This is not adequately explained as due to the necessity of distinguishing between Job and the friends, for this the singular and plural forms of address would have sufficed. It is one of the supplementer's mannerisms.

**2.** It would show a strange lack of literary tact to credit the

3 My words *shall utter* the uprightness of my heart:
And that which my lips know they shall speak sincerely.
4 The spirit of God hath made me,
And the breath of the Almighty giveth me life.
5 If thou canst, answer thou me;
Set *thy words* in order before me, stand forth.
6 Behold, I am toward God even as thou art:
I also am formed out of the clay.
7 Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid,

---

great genius to whom we owe the poem with such bathos as this, but Bickell needlessly strikes it out as 'too prosaic even for Elihu.' **mouth** is literally 'palate.'

**3.** Literally 'uprightness of heart *are* my words,' a rather awkward sentence. Duhm makes a slight correction (*yāshīg* for *yōsher*); and gets the sense 'My heart overflows with words of knowledge, My lips speak sincerely'; there is in that case a reminiscence of the metaphor in xxxii. 19.

**4.** Cf. xxxii. 8. This stands in no good connexion here, but it probably followed verse 6 originally (see note), and meant I am, like you, a creature of God. Budde and Duhm unite to omit it, but transposition is all that is required. The reference is not to any special endowment of the speaker, but to his participation with Job in the common origin of man (Gen. ii. 7).

**5** should follow immediately on verse 3. The second line might also mean 'Set the battle in array before me.'

**6.** The marg. 'I am according to thy wish in God's stead' (so A.V.) is clearly incorrect. Job wished God to speak, not another human special pleader, and even if we could torture the words into saying that Elihu, as God's deputy, was speaking to gratify as far as possible Job's wish for God to appear, this would not suit the next line. He means that he and Job both stand on the same footing before God. He, like Job, was formed out of the clay. The reference is to Gen. ii. 7, and the fact that there the formation of man from the dust of the ground is followed by the breathing into his nostrils the breath of life is almost enough to prove that verse 4, corresponding to this second part of the creative act, originally stood after verse 6, and is accordingly not, as Budde says, superfluous here.

**7.** The reference is to Job's fear that if God appeared he might be paralysed by the dread inspired by His majesty (ix. 34, xiii. 21). You need not be afraid of *me*, Elihu says, I am just a man like yourself. The implied suggestion is that he can explain

Neither shall my pressure be heavy upon thee.
Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, 8
And I have heard the voice of *thy* words, *saying*,
I am clean, without transgression; 9
I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me:
Behold, he findeth occasions against me, 10
He counteth me for his enemy;
He putteth my feet in the stocks, 11
He marketh all my paths.
Behold, I will answer thee, in this thou art not just; 12
For God is greater than man.

---

what Job wants to know, without God appearing for this purpose, and without the risks to Job such an appearance would involve; once more (see note on xxxii. 13) a criticism of the poet for letting God speak to Job out of the storm. How comforted Job should feel to get what he wants on such easy terms! One can imagine how the poet's scorn would have crushed this presumptuous meddler.

**my pressure:** the word occurs only here; it is better with many scholars to read with the LXX, 'my hand.'

**8.** After this diffuse, inflated, conceited introduction, in which Elihu occupies twenty-four verses, telling his betters that he is going to speak and explaining why he does so, he comes to the matter in hand. He proceeds to select for rebuke Job's self-justification and his accusation of God.

**9.** Job's assertions perhaps hardly went so far as this, in fact he admits transgression in vii. 21, xiii. 26. Still, he had affirmed his integrity in very strong terms ix. 21, x. 7, xiii. 18, xvi. 17, xxiii. 7, 10–12, xxvii. 4–6, xxxi.

**10.** Cf. x. 13–17, xix. 6–12. The first line summarizes Job's words, the second quotes xiii. 24. **occasions:** marg. 'causes of alienation.'

**11.** Quoted from xiii. 27.

**12.** The marg. renders the first line 'Behold, in this thou art not just; I will answer thee.' It is characteristic of the friends, and still more of Elihu, to rebut Job's assertions of God's immorality with affirmations of His greatness. The LXX translates a different text, 'Behold thou sayest I am righteous, and He does not answer.' The word to be righteous is much like the word to cry, and on the basis of this emendation by Bickell, Duhm reads, 'Behold, if I cry He does not answer.' In this case

13 Why dost thou strive against him?
For he giveth not account of any of his matters.
14 For God speaketh once,
Yea twice, *though man* regardeth it not.
15 In a dream, in a vision of the night,
When deep sleep falleth upon men,
In slumberings upon the bed;

---

Elihu is still quoting Job, and the reference is to such passages as ix. 16, xiii. 24, xix. 7, xxiii. 8, 9, xxx. 20. In the second line the LXX translation also presupposes a different Hebrew text; Duhm reads 'Eloah hides himself from men' (cf. ix. 11, xxiii. 3, 8, 9).

**13.** The marg. renders 'Why dost thou strive against him, for that he giveth not account of his matters?' In that case the meaning is, Why do you complain that God gives no account of His dealings with you? This is much better than the text, inasmuch as verse 14 then continues, You are mistaken in your facts, God *does* speak to men. The text means, Why are you so foolish as to enter on a useless struggle with God? He will never condescend to explain His actions to you. This would fit Elihu's reprobation of the hope that God would Himself answer Job. But it does not suit the passage which follows, since Elihu asserts that there are ways in which God does speak to men. The translation of the second line is however indefensible. The literal translation is 'For (or that) He does not answer any of his words.' We must either take 'his words' to mean man's words, or, altering the pronominal suffix, read 'That He does not answer any of thy words,' or, with the LXX, 'He does not answer any of my words.' The meaning is in any case, Why strive with God on the ground that He does not answer you? (verse 13). He does answer in two ways (verse 14).

**14.** Rather as marg., 'in one way, yea, in two.'

*though man* **regardeth it not:** *lit.* 'he doth not see it.' The meaning may be that God's modes of revelation are invisible. The text is very elliptical. The sense required seems to be that God speaks in one way, and then if man does not pay any regard, He speaks in a second way. Several have unjustifiably got this meaning out of the present text. It is better with Ley to insert 'if,' rendering 'yea, in two, if man regardeth it not.'

**15.** The first way, a dream in the night. The description recalls that of Eliphaz iv. 12 ff.; the second line is quoted from iv. 13, and therefore needlessly struck out by Bickell, Budde, and Duhm.

Then he openeth the ears of men, 16
And sealeth their instruction,
That he may withdraw man *from his* purpose, 17
And hide pride from man;
He keepeth back his soul from the pit, 18
And his life from perishing by the sword.
He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, 19
And with continual strife in his bones:

---

**16. openeth:** *lit.* 'uncovereth,' cf. 1 Sam. ix. 15, 2 Sam. vii. 27, also Isa. l. 5.

**sealeth their instruction:** the meaning is not clear. It may be He communicates the instruction, then closes the ear and seals it, that it may be retained; or, He impresses the instruction on the recipients as an impression is stamped on a seal. Since, however, Elihu contemplates that God's action may fail of its purpose, a metaphor implying a permanent impression seems inappropriate. The LXX pointed the word translated 'sealeth' differently, and we should probably with several scholars accept this, translating 'and terrifieth them through warnings.'

**17.** The text is to be preferred to the marg. 'That man may put away *his* purpose, and that he may hide.' It would be better, with many, to insert 'from his' in the Hebrew, though it would perhaps be still better to read with the LXX, 'That he may withdraw man from unrighteousness.'

**hide:** an unsuitable word. Several emendations have been proposed. Either Dillmann's 'destroy' (*$y^e$kalleh*) or Bickell's 'cut off' (*$y^e$kasseaḥ*) would do admirably. It would be a mistake to build on this passage and xxxvi. 9 the theory that the secret sin in Job brought to light by Elihu is spiritual pride.

**18.** Better as in marg. 'That he may keep back.'

**perishing by the sword** (marg. 'weapons'). The Hebrew is very strange; Duhm proposes a much more probable reading, 'going down to Sheol.' Marshall cleverly suggests 'into the flame,' i. e. of Gehenna; but does not this imply too developed an eschatology?

**19.** God's second method of revelation, apparently employed when the first has passed unregarded (see note on verse 14). This method is that of the ministry of angels in sickness.

The alternative reading 'While all his bones are firm,' though accepted by Dillmann, gives no suitable sense. The meaning is that his bones are wrenched by his pains as if two parties were at strife over them, each seeking to tear them from the other.

20 So that his life abhorreth bread,
And his soul dainty meat.
21 His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen;
And his bones that were not seen stick out.
22 Yea, his soul draweth near unto the pit,
And his life to the destroyers.
23 If there be with him an angel,
An interpreter, one among a thousand,
To shew unto man what is right for him;
24 Then he is gracious unto him, and saith,

---

**20.** Cf. Ps. cvii. 18. **life** is a synonym for 'soul,' which here perhaps means appetite. He is hungry, but his sickness gives him nausea at the sight of food.

**21.** The first line may mean, His flesh is so destroyed as to lose its comeliness (cf. 1 Sam. xvi. 12). The translation in the text gives a strange sense, for the flesh does not become invisible, even in the severest illnesses. Duhm reads 'his flesh is consumed by wasting' (*rāzī*, Isa. xxiv. 16, for *rō'i*).

**that were not seen:** very prosaic; we might translate 'And his bones are gradually laid bare.' But perhaps the words should be omitted as a variant of the similar word in the preceding line.

**22. the destroyers:** i. e. the angels of death. They are mentioned nowhere else in the O. T., though we have similar references in the story of the angel of the pestilence, 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17, which is parallel to 1 Chron. xxi. 15, 16, also 2 Kings xix. 35 = Isa. xxxvii. 36, parallel to 2 Chron. xxxii. 21 (Sennacherib's army), further Ps. lxxviii. 49. We might also compare in the N. T. 'perished by the destroyer,' 1 Cor. x. 10 (the murmuring Israelites in the desert). These examples, however, afford no very close parallel. Accordingly several read 'to the dead.' But it is mistaken to correct the text just because no parallel can be quoted. Where have we a parallel to the next verse?

**23.** When the sufferer is thus about to fall into the clutches of the angels of death, another angel, whose function it is to explain to him God's purpose in his suffering, is sent to deliver him. This angel is 'one of the thousand' (marg.) told off for this special service, so bountiful is the provision God has made. He shows to man what is right for him (marg. 'his uprightness). Possibly the text originally was 'his fault' (cf. LXX).

**24.** It has been usual to suppose that God is the speaker, but the change of subject is unlikely. We should translate with

Deliver him from going down to the pit,
I have found a ransom.
His flesh shall be fresher than a child's ; 25
He returneth to the days of his youth :
He prayeth unto God, and he is favourable unto him ; 26
So that he seeth his face with joy :
And he restoreth unto man his righteousness.
He singeth before men, and saith, 27
I have sinned, and perverted that which was right,
And it profited me not :
He hath redeemed my soul from going into the pit, 28
And my life shall behold the light.
Lo, all these things doth God work, 29
Twice, *yea* thrice, with a man,

---

marg. 'And he be gracious unto him, and say,' placing a colon after 'ransom,' instead of a full stop. The angel, it is to be assumed, finding the sufferer amenable to his instruction, takes compassion on him, and intercedes for him. Since he promises to purchase his release, the one to whom his petition is addressed can hardly be God, but the angel of death, who will not let his victim go without an equivalent. In what the ransom consists is not said, but according to xxxvi. 18, it is supposed to be the severe affliction he has endured.

**25.** Happy issue of his discipline. The description recalls that of Naaman's recovery from leprosy, 2 Kings v. 14. This verse hardly forms part of the angel's address to the angel of death.

**26.** Possibly the reference is to his return to the Temple services ; to see God's face is used in this sense. And this may explain the reference to his singing before men, which especially reminds us of Ps. xxii. 22, 25, and Isa. xxxviii. 20, in both of which we have praise for deliverance rendered at the point of death.

**27. He singeth before men :** better than marg. 'He looketh upon men.'

**it profited me not :** this and the alternative marg. 'it was not meet for me,' are alike to be rejected in favour of the first marg., 'it was not requited me,' though this is itself rather dubious. It must, however, be very near the sense.

**29.** So mercifully God deals with man ; not, as Merx takes it,

30 To bring back his soul from the pit,
That he may be enlightened with the light of the living.
31 Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me:
Hold thy peace, and I will speak.
32 If thou hast any thing to say, answer me:
Speak, for I desire to justify thee.
33 If not, hearken thou unto me:
Hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom.

**34** Moreover Elihu answered and said,

---

so many opportunities and no more, for His patience has its limits.

**30. the living**: marg. 'life' is better.

**31–33.** Exhortation to Job to listen to his next speech, and to urge what he can in self-defence. There is no necessity to strike out or transfer to another place all or any of these verses. True, the poet would not have written so.

Elihu's contribution amounts to this, that so far from God dealing with man as Job asserts that He has dealt with him, He seeks to restrain him from evil ways by dreams, and if those fail, by severe sickness, which an angel uses to instruct him, and if this succeeds he is restored by the angel to full health. Of course, the thought is differently worked out, but the night-vision, the angel of instruction, and the disciplinary value of affliction are all present in the first speech of Eliphaz. The angelology, however, is much more developed here.

xxxiv. 1–9. Elihu continues with an appeal for the attention of the wise, that they may reach a right decision. Job has complained that God has defrauded him of his right, and that he is incurably wounded, in spite of his innocence. He is a scorner, a companion of the wicked, for he has denied that religion is profitable.

xxxiv. 10–15. But God cannot do wrong, He renders exact retribution. He is no subject ruler, but the supreme Lord, who might cause mankind to perish by withdrawing His spirit.

xxxiv. 16–28. But injustice is incompatible with rule, and how can one condemn that God in whose sight princes and nobles are wicked, who is no respecter of persons? Suddenly the mighty die, for God sees all things, and has no need to investigate any man's case, but without inquisition supplants the mighty. He strikes

Hear my words, ye wise men ; 2
And give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.
For the ear trieth words, 3
As the palate tasteth meat.
Let us choose for us that which is right : 4
Let us know among ourselves what is good.
For Job hath said, I am righteous, 5
And God hath taken away my right :
Notwithstanding my right I am *accounted* a liar ; 6
My wound is incurable, *though I am* without transgression.
What man is like Job, 7
Who drinketh up scorning like water ?
Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, 8
And walketh with wicked men.

---

the wicked for abandoning His ways and acting so oppressively that the cry of the distressed rose up to God.

xxxiv. 29–37. Is man to condemn God if He remain inactive, setting up the wicked as king ? Let Job penitently confess his sin, promise amendment, and ask instruction. Is he to dictate terms to God ? The wise will say that Job has spoken without wisdom. Would that his trial might continue to the end, for to his sin he adds rebellious utterances against God.

xxxiv. **2**. The 'wise men' are probably not the friends whom he has so uncomplimentarily addressed. The author is thinking of his readers ; what he intended Elihu to mean is not so clear. It may be no more than a vague rhetorical flourish, but the wise among the bystanders may be intended (cf. verse 34). True, there is no indication in the poem itself that bystanders were present, but the inventor of Elihu may well have imagined other bystanders besides his hero.

**3.** Borrowed from xii. 11.

**5.** Cf. xiii. 18, xxvii. 2.

**6.** Marg. as A.V., 'Should I lie against my right ?' i.e. am I to plead guilty, when I am really innocent ? But the translation in the text is better.

**My wound :** *lit.* 'mine arrow.' The prefixing of another consonant would give 'my wound' (*maḥătsi*).

**7.** On this and the next verse cf. Ps. i. 1. On the second line cf. xv. 16, and see Thomson, *Land and the Book*, p. 319.

9 For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing
That he should delight himself with God.
10 Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding:
Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness;
And from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.
11 For the work of a man shall he render unto him,
And cause every man to find according to his ways.
12 Yea, of a surety, God will not do wickedly,
Neither will the Almighty pervert judgement.
13 Who gave him a charge over the earth?
Or who hath disposed the whole world?
14 If he set his heart upon man,
*If* he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;

---

**9.** The expression of Job's 'scorning,' i.e. his impious scepticism. Job had not said this in so many words, though his assertion that God slew perfect and wicked without discrimination, still more that the wicked prospered abundantly, makes the statement not unfair. Cf. the Psalms devoted to the problem of suffering (xxxvii, xlix, lxxiii), and especially the wail of the pious, Mal. iii. 14–16. This assertion is discussed in the next chapter.

**delight himself with:** marg. 'consent with,' see Ps. l. 18.

**10–12.** Diffuse re-statement of Bildad's maxim, viii. 3.

**13.** God is not the deputy of a higher power. He is the sovereign ruler, not the satrap of a province, who governs it for self-enrichment without regard for right.

**disposed:** the marg. 'laid upon him' would yield a better parallel, but 'upon him' should have been expressed. The addition of a single consonant (Budde) would give the sense 'Who observeth the whole world?' Perhaps Duhm is right in transferring 'his heart' from verse 14 to this verse, 'Who setteth his heart on the whole world?' God can see everything that takes place, therefore wrong does not escape Him. See note on 14.

**14.** The verse is open to several interpretations. We may translate the present text, 'If he set his heart upon himself,' the meaning is then if God thinks of Himself alone and recalls to Himself the breath of life He has imparted to man. The argument would then be God does not act in this selfish way, hence He is righteous; the logic is not flawless. For **set**, however, there is another reading, 'cause to return,' but 'cause his heart to return to himself' is a strange expression. Further, the parallelism

All flesh shall perish together, 15
And man shall turn again unto dust.
If now *thou hast* understanding, hear this: 16
Hearken to the voice of my words.
Shall even one that hateth right govern? 17
And wilt thou condemn him that is just *and* mighty?

---

suggests that we should have one noun in the second line, not two. When now we take into account the variation in reading, the improbability that 'set' (the word translated 'disposed' in verse 13 is the same as that rendered 'set' here) should occur in two consecutive lines, the consequent probability that 'cause to return' is the original reading here, the unsuitability of 'his heart' to this, and finally the inequality of the parallelism, Duhm's suggestion that 'his heart' has been inserted here after 'set' instead of after 'set' in verse 13 becomes very attractive. We should accordingly read 'If He cause his spirit to return to Him, And gather to Him his breath,' i. e. if God withdraws to Himself the breath He has lent to man; cf. xxxiii. 4 and Eccles. xii. 7, 'the spirit return unto God who gave it'; Ps. civ. 29, 30, especially the words 'thou gatherest in their breath.'

**15.** If God thus withdraw the breath He has given, man dies and becomes dust again; cf. the two passages last quoted. The thought rests on Gen. ii. 7, man is dust animated by the breath of God, when the breath is taken back, he becomes dust again. The argument is not very clear; verses 14 and 15 might conceivably support verse 13, God is no subordinate ruler, for the whole existence of mankind depends on His good pleasure. More probably the thought is, He supplies to all men of His own spirit, and were He a capricious or unrighteous Deity He might at any moment withdraw the boon of life; that man still lives on proves His benevolent care.

**16.** Better as marg. 'Only understand.'

**17.** The fact that God governs means that His rule is righteous, a strange begging of the question. The pious man may laudably assert the righteousness of God's rule, but it is out of place to assert it in an argument, where it is the very point to be proved. Besides, Elihu goes much beyond this, asserting that rule and injustice are things incompatible. That in the long run empires built on wrong fall because of it may be true. Yet we are able to say 'Rome shall perish . . . In the blood that she has spilt,' only because we are assured that the order of the world is moral. But when the previous question is raised, Is it moral? the reply, Rule and injustice cannot go together, is quite wide of the mark.

18 Is it *fit* to say to a king, *Thou art* vile?
*Or* to nobles, *Ye are* wicked?
19 *How much less to* him that respecteth not the persons of
princes,
Nor regardeth the rich more than the poor?
For they all are the work of his hands.
20 In a moment they die, even at midnight;
The people are shaken and pass away,
And the mighty are taken away without hand.

---

Kipling's 'Lest we forget, lest we forget' is answered by Watson's 'When we forgot, when we forgot.' What retort to Watson does Elihu enable us to make?

**18.** According to the text the meaning is, None would speak evil of dignities to their face, how much less to God, so great that all human dignities vanish in His sight, and before whom rich and poor stand on a dead level. But with LXX, Vulgate, and many commentators we should change the pointing of the first word, and read 'Who saith to a king, *Thou art* vile, and to nobles, *Ye are* wicked; that respecteth not,' &c. It is God who speaks thus to king and nobles.

**vile:** Heb. 'belial.'

**19.** God's impartiality based on the fact that rich and poor alike stand in the same creaturely relation to Him. Or the reference in the third line may be to the king and nobles.

**20.** The present division is better than that of marg. and A. V. 'and at midnight the people,' &c. The second line is strange. Is the meaning that a whole nation perishes? Marshall explains 'The people are momentarily agitated, but then pass on, and the disaffected ones are forgotten.' He explains the first line of the mysterious ways sovereigns have of removing traitors. But the reference is rather to God's mysterious action (**without hand**). Probably the reference is to the death of rulers. We could inser 'from' before **the people**, with Duhm, 'they are torn away from the people.' But Budde very ingeniously suggests that the las two consonants of the word translated 'shaken' should be written over again (the copyist having written them once instead of twice) and connected with those translated 'people.' We thus get the plural of the word translated 'rich' in the preceding verse (*shōʿīm*) 'the rich are shaken and pass away,' which forms a better paralle to the next line.

**without hand:** by the power of God; cf. xx. 26; Zech. iv. 6 Isa. xxxi. 8; Dan. ii. 34. We are reminded of the death of th

For his eyes are upon the ways of a man, 21
And he seeth all his goings.
There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, 22
Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.
For he needeth not further to consider a man, 23
That he should go before God in judgement.
He breaketh in pieces mighty men *in ways* past finding out, 24
And setteth others in their stead.
Therefore he taketh knowledge of their works ; 25
And he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed.
He striketh them as wicked men 26
In the open sight of others ;

---

firstborn, the destruction of Sennacherib's army, Ezekiel's prediction of the overthrow of Gog.

**23.** The first line is expressed in strange Hebrew. We should, with Budde, Duhm, and Klostermann, accept G. H. B. Wright's excellent emendation *mōʽedh* for *ʽōdh*, 'For He appointeth no set time for man that he should go before God in judgement.' Marshall's emendation *ʽēth* yields the same sense and is supported by xxiv. 1, but is not so easy. Since nothing escapes God's notice, He has no need to have set seasons for investigation, but, as the next verse says, breaks the mighty in pieces without it.

**24.** *in ways* **past finding out :** much better as in marg. 'without inquisition' ; see preceding note.

**25.** Budde omits 25-28, Duhm omits verse 27 and takes the greater part of verse 25 (as far as 'night') as a gloss on verse 20. We must try, however, to make the best of the present arrangement ; not expecting too much.

**Therefore** is not easy ; it seems to invert the logical relation. It would be easier to read 'so' or 'for.'

**destroyed :** *lit.* 'crushed.'

**26.** The first line is difficult, since they were sinners in Elihu's view ; Bickell, followed by Budde, pointed the word rendered 'as' differently, and made it (*tāḥēth*) a verb, but had then to insert a subject, 'his wrath breaks the wicked.' This had the advantage of liberating 'he striketh' for the second line, which thus attains a normal length. Duhm connects the last word of verse 25 with this verse and reads 'ruins' (*rᵉsīsīm*) for 'wicked' : 'They are

27 Because they turned aside from following him,
And would not have regard to any of his ways:
28 So that they caused the cry of the poor to come unto him,
And he heard the cry of the afflicted.
29 When he giveth quietness, who then can condemn?
And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?
Whether *it be done* unto a nation, or unto a man, alike:
30 That the godless man reign not,
That there be none to ensnare the people.

---

crushed under ruins.' The second line represents them as put to death 'in the place of beholders,' i. e. at the place of public execution. G. H. B. Wright, 'in the place of the Rephaim,' i. e. the underworld.

**28.** The result of their disregard of God's ways was that they oppressed the poor, and thus caused God to hear their cry. The marg. renders 'That they might cause . . . and that he might hear.' In that case the verse connects with verse 26; God punishes the oppressor that He may hear the cry of the oppressed. It would be better to substitute 'he' for 'they.' But is not the hearing of their cry rather the cause than the result of the oppressor's overthrow?

**29.** With this verse begins an obscure passage, though not incurably corrupt. In the first line we should render 'If He remains quiet,' and the sense of the verse is that if God, as Carlyle said, 'does nothing,' i. e. does not intervene to hinder wrong, man has no right to condemn Him. 'Blind unbelief is sure to err.' The hiding of His face expresses the same meaning as His keeping quiet.

**behold him:** this may be correct, but the parallelism suggests another word expressive of condemnation. Budde aptly suggests 'blame him' (*y$^e$yass$^e$rennū* for *y$^e$shūrennū*).

The third line is regarded as a gloss by Budde. Duhm begins a new sentence with it, but for 'alike' (*yāḥad*) reads 'he watches' (*yā'ūr*), 'But he watches over nation and men, That one of them that ensnare the people may not reign' (omitting 'the godless man' as a gloss explaining what the ensnarers of the people are).

**30.** This could be connected with the preceding verse only by violence. God's inactivity ought hardly to be regarded as meant to prevent the reign of the godless. We might take it as Duhm (see preceding note). Or we might with Theodotion and the Targum read *mamlīkh* for *mimm$^e$lōkh*, 'If He cause a godless man to reign, One of them that ensnare the people.' This, then

For hath any said unto God, 31
I have borne *chastisement*, I will not offend *any more* :
That which I see not teach thou me : 32
If I have done iniquity, I will do it no more ?
Shall his recompence be as thou wilt, that thou refusest it ? 33
For thou must choose, and not I :
Therefore speak what thou knowest.
Men of understanding will say unto me, 34
Yea, every wise man that heareth me :
Job speaketh without knowledge, 35
And his words are without wisdom.
Would that Job were tried unto the end, 36
Because of his answering like wicked men.

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would connect with verse 29 as an instance of God's hiding His face.

**31, 32.** A difficult passage. Does it mean, Who but Job ever criticized God's action in punishing him when innocent, and promised to sin no more, if only his sin could be shown him? Or is the confession a pious one and the meaning, Such a pious confession Job has not made? Or should we regard verses 31 and 32 as completed by verse 33, translating, 'And if one say unto God . . . Shall his recompence, &c.'? The text is not above suspicion, the interrogative stands in an unusual place. A different division of the consonants removes this difficulty, and we may, with some other emendations, read with Ley, 'But say unto Eloah, I have borne my sin, I will not do evil any more, What I see not, &c.' The words thus become an exhortation to Job.

**33.** Continuing his exhortation by the scornful question if Job is to dictate terms to God.

Instead of 'not I' it would be far better, with Ley, to read 'not God'; you, forsooth, and not God, must choose! Marshall reaches substantially the same sense with the present text: 'Elihu says, "Not I," as if he were speaking in the name of God.'

**36.** After the decision of the 'wise men' in verse 35, Elihu resumes, though possibly the quotation is continued to the end of the chapter. In any case the sentiments are Elihu's. He would have him kept on the rack till he changed his tone. This verse and the following seem to show that Elihu charges Job, as the friends had done, (*a*) with sin which had caused his punishment, (*b*) with rebellious language against God under his punishment.

37 For he addeth rebellion unto his sin,
He clappeth his hands among us,
And multiplieth his words against God.

**35** Moreover Elihu answered and said,

---

Budde holds strongly that Elihu attacks Job for his rebellious speeches only, and says that if the usual view were correct the verse would have to be struck out. It is certainly no argument for this that the wise men base their judgement only on what they know, i. e. Job's speeches. For they know also his calamities, and were as likely as the friends to infer his sin from them. That Elihu attributed Job's sufferings to God's design of bringing to consciousness Job's spiritual pride is a view of Budde's that few are able to accept. It may be granted, however, that 'sin' and 'rebellion' are not necessarily to be sharply distinguished, the expression meaning simply that he heaps sin upon sin, but this is, all the same, unlikely.

**37. clappeth his hands:** in insult. 'His hands' is not expressed, however. Marshall translates 'pours forth.' Duhm and Ley omit.

Elihu's position in this chapter is substantially that of the friends. The Ruler of the universe cannot be unjust. Such proof as he offers is weak. The gift of life and its preservation may prove the benevolence of God, but they might be accounted for by self-seeking aims, and benevolence does not readily explain life's misery. That government cannot be founded on injustice is simply asserted, Job's proofs to the contrary are ignored. God's omniscience had been confessed quite freely by Job, but it made the problem more difficult rather than more simple. The exhortation to Job is conceived in a spirit more reprehensible even than that of the friends.

xxxv. 1–8. Elihu asks Job if his righteousness before God finds expression in his question whether righteousness is profitable. Look at the skies and see how exalted God is. Man's sin or righteousness cannot injure or profit Him, but only his fellow man.

xxxv. 9–16. Men cry out because they suffer from oppression. But they do not inquire for God, who gives songs in the night of sorrow, who makes us wiser than beast or bird. They cry out because of the pride of the wicked, but God does not answer. No, God certainly will not regard vanity. How much less will He regard Job when he complains of His delay. Let him be silent before God, and wait His time. But Job argues that be-

Thinkest thou this to be *thy* right, 2
*Or* sayest thou, My righteousness is more than God's,
That thou sayest, What advantage will it be unto thee? 3
*And*, What profit shall I have, more than if I had
  sinned?
I will answer thee, 4
And thy companions with thee.
Look unto the heavens, and see; 5
And behold the skies, which are higher than thou.

---

cause God does not punish rebellion He makes light of it. So Job utters foolish and empty words.

**2. this** refers to what is to follow in verse 3. The second line might be better translated 'And callest it my righteousness before God.' Is the question in verse 3 a sample of that righteousness of which he boasts? No truly righteous person could ask such a question.

**3. unto thee:** not God, but his antagonist. He might mean, What advantage have you from your righteousness; the speech may be indirect in this line, and direct in the next, so that 'thee' and 'I' both mean Job. It would be much simpler to read 'me' for 'thee.'

**4. companions:** it is not clear whether the reference is to the three friends, or to those who shared Job's view. That Elihu proceeds to appropriate the thoughts of the friends is no proof that he cannot be professing to instruct them; such conduct would be quite characteristic of him. Budde omits the verse. Marshall ingeniously suggests that Elihu first quotes the opinions of the friends and then (verses 9–13) refutes them. But the two views, that God gains or loses nothing by man's conduct, and that He teaches and comforts man, stand in no opposition to each other. It is only when the former thought is extended to an assertion of God's complete indifference to man that any contradiction emerges. Eliphaz affirmed that man's righteousness did not profit God, and yet depicted in exquisite language God's tenderness to man (v. 18 ff.). Besides, the thought that man's sin cannot hurt God is expressed by Job himself (vii. 20), yet he accuses God in the same breath, not of indifference, but of malignant, incessant watchfulness. The thought of God's exaltation is also very congenial to Elihu. We should therefore conclude that he is giving his own answer, in the following verses, to the question in verse 3.

**5.** An echo of xxii. 12, cf. xi. 7–9. God is too high for man's deeds to profit or injure Him.

6 If thou hast sinned, what doest thou against him?
And if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him?
7 If thou be righteous, what givest thou him?
Or what receiveth he of thine hand?
8 Thy wickedness *may hurt* a man as thou art;
And thy righteousness *may profit* a son of man.
9 By reason of the multitude of oppressions they cry out;
They cry for help by reason of the arm of the mighty.
10 But none saith, Where is God my Maker,
Who giveth songs in the night;
11 Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth,
And maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?
12 There they cry, but none giveth answer,
Because of the pride of evil men.

---

**6–8.** Repetition of xxii. 2, 3, with expression of the contrast in conduct and in person affected. Cf. Job's own utterance, vii. 20. Self-interest is accordingly not present in God as a disturbing influence to entice Him from the path of justice. He must therefore treat men according to their deserts; righteousness *pays.*

Duhm places verse 16 after verse 8, bringing verse 15 in close connexion with xxxvi. 2. He also places verse 9 after verse 11, but then strikes out verses 9, 12 as a gloss on xxxvi. 7 ff.

**9.** But if God's rule is righteous, why the cry of the oppressed?

**10.** The reason is that their cry is not the cry for God, but simply for relief. Suffering should send man to God. The second line is beautiful, worthy of the poet himself. If the author could only have kept at this height! Even in the dark hours of pain, God fills the sufferer with rapture, that bursts instinctively into songs of praise. So Paul and Silas in prison.

**11.** Contrast xii. 7, 8, where it is suggested that the beasts and birds can teach concerning the ways of God. But God makes us wiser even than He makes them. An antique view of the animal creation shines through (see note on xxviii. 7). Naturally the meaning is not that God teaches us more than the animals teach us.

**12.** The sense would be clearer with a change in the order, 'There they cry because of the pride of evil men, but none giveth answer' (marg. 'but he answereth not').

Surely God will not hear vanity, 13
Neither will the Almighty regard it.
How much less when thou sayest thou beholdest him not, 14
The cause is before him, and thou waitest for him!
But now, because he hath not visited in his anger, 15
Neither doth he greatly regard arrogance;
Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vanity; 16
He multiplieth words without knowledge.

---

**13.** The cry is not heard, because it is 'vanity'; there is the element of unreality in it, so far as while it is in earnest for help, it is a cry to God with no genuine religious element in it.

**14.** The translation in the text means, If God will not hear 'vanity,' how much less will He listen to you, when you complain that you cannot see Him, and that, while you have presented your case, He keeps you waiting for His answer. Such irreligion deserves to receive no response. The marg. is perhaps to be preferred, 'How much less when thou sayest thou beholdest him not! The cause is before him; therefore wait thou for him.' Elihu, after explaining the delay by Job's complaint against God, encourages him by the reminder that his case is before God, and exhorts him to wait for His decision. But we should probably, with Perles, read 'Silence before Him' (*dōm* for *dīn*), cf. Ps. xxxvii. 7.

**15.** The translation in the text makes verse 16 the completion of the sentence begun in verse 15, and this view is taken by several scholars. So far as the words go the reference might then be to Job's escape from anger, and the meaning would be that he takes advantage of God's forbearance. But he had been visited in anger already. The meaning would accordingly have to be that God's failure to punish iniquity led Job to indulge in unbecoming criticism. The marg. is probably to be preferred, according to which verse 15 is complete in itself, 'But now, because he hath not visited in his anger, *Thou sayest*, He doth not greatly regard arrogance. Thus doth Job, &c.' Job infers from God's failure to punish arrogance that it gave Him no concern. This yields good sense. The word translated 'arrogance' occurs nowhere else. Probably we should read 'rebellion' as in xxxiv. 37 (*pesha'* for *pash*).

**16.** Elihu's verdict on Job's criticism of the Divine government. In this speech Elihu deals with two questions, What is the profit of righteousness? and Why does not God hear the cry of the oppressed? The former he answers on lines already laid

**36** Elihu also proceeded, and said,
2 Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee;
For I have yet somewhat to say on God's behalf.
3 I will fetch my knowledge from afar,
And will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.
4 For truly my words are not false:
One that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.
5 Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any:
He is mighty in strength of understanding.

---

down by Eliphaz. God is too exalted to be profited by man's righteousness or injured by his sin. Therefore His retributive justice is not perverted by self-interest, accordingly the righteous will gain the due profit from their conduct. Obviously this did not at all meet Job's case. To the second question he gives a reply of his own. The oppressed cry to God from self-regarding, not from religious motives. He does not see that while this is true in certain instances, there are numerous cases, Job's among them, to which it does not apply.

xxxvi. 1–4. Elihu has still something to add for God, derived from a comprehensive survey of the universe, let Job listen, for he speaks truly and with perfect knowledge.

xxxvi. 5–12. God is mighty, but despises none. He does not preserve the wicked, but He exalts the righteous. He may afflict them, but it is for their instruction, that they may see themselves to have acted proudly. If they listen to His admonitions they shall prosper, but if not they shall perish.

xxxvi. 13–21. If they cherish angry thoughts they die before their time. By affliction God delivers the afflicted and opens their ear to His teaching. So might it be with Job. But he is filled with the judgement of the wicked. Let not his sufferings lead him astray. Suffering is indispensable. Let him not long for the calamity that overwhelms nations; nor regard iniquity, which he is preferring to affliction.

**2. Suffer:** *lit.* 'wait for.' The second line is literally 'For *there are* yet words for God.'

**3.** By a comprehensive survey of the universe he will establish God's righteousness. This is, of course, the chief aim of his speeches.

**4.** Extravagant self-praise even for an Oriental, the more pitiful that the speeches themselves give the lie to his claim.

**5.** God's might is not associated with contempt for the weak.

He preserveth not the life of the wicked : 6
But giveth to the afflicted *their* right.
He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous : 7
But with kings upon the throne
He setteth them for ever, and they are exalted.
And if they be bound in fetters, 8
And be taken in the cords of affliction ;
Then he sheweth them their work, 9
And their transgressions, that they have behaved themselves proudly.
He openeth also their ear to instruction, 10
And commandeth that they return from iniquity.
If they hearken and serve *him*, 11
They shall spend their days in prosperity,
And their years in pleasures.
But if they hearken not, they shall perish by the sword, 12
And they shall die without knowledge.
But they that are godless in heart lay up anger : 13

---

The second line should probably read 'He is mighty in strength and understanding' (Ley), or perhaps 'He is mighty in strength and wise of understanding' (Budde). **Understanding** is literally 'heart.' Duhm by elimination of variants and emendation reduces the two lines to one, 'See, God despises the stubborn of heart.' It would improve the connexion and parallelism with what follows if we could accept this, but the change involved is considerable.

**7.** For **his eyes** we should probably read, with the LXX, 'right.'

**8.** Those who are thus bound in the fetters of affliction seem to be the righteous. While God does exalt the righteous there are cases where they fall into trouble.

**9.** God's purpose in their affliction, to bring them to a knowledge of their sin.

**11. pleasures:** marg. 'pleasantness.' For verses 11, 12 cf. Isa. i. 19, 20.

**12. the sword:** marg. 'weapons.' Duhm reads 'to Sheol' as in xxxiii. 18.

**13.** Budde strikes out this verse and the following, on insufficient grounds. The words **lay up anger** are difficult, and

They cry not for help when he bindeth them.
14 They die in youth,
And their life *perisheth* among the unclean.
15 He delivereth the afflicted by his affliction,
And openeth their ear in oppression.
16 Yea, he would have led thee away out of distress

---

many explanations have been given. The meaning seems to be that instead of accepting God's discipline in the right spirit they cherish angry thoughts about it. The second line describes their sullen demeanour under it; they will not cry to God for help.

**14.** *Lit.* 'their soul dieth in youth.'

**among:** marg. 'like,' which at any rate represents the meaning.

**unclean:** marg. 'sodomites,' see Deut. xxiii. 17. The word literally means 'consecrated ones.' They were dedicated to the service of impurity at the temples, and their early death, due to unnatural vice, seems to have become proverbial.

**15. by his affliction** is much better than the marg. 'in his affliction.' On the other hand, it would be better to substitute the marg. 'by adversity' for **in oppression.**

**16-19.** These verses are notoriously difficult, through ambiguity in the expressions employed, coupled with corruption of the text. The R. V. translation gives a smooth, easy sense for verse 16. Affliction is designed to lead the sufferer to deliverance (verse 15). Yes, so it would have been with Job, God would have led him from distress into abundance (verse 16). But it is possible, keeping this general sense, to take the verse as expressing not what God would have done, but what He is doing, and translate 'yea, he allureth thee.' The words rendered **out of distress** are literally 'out of the mouth of distress.' An entirely different meaning can be given to the verse if we translate, 'And thee hath unconstrained freedom led away from the mouth of distress, and the peacefulness (or plenty) of thy table which is full of fatness.' 'The mouth of distress' must then be explained as the cry for help in trouble addressed to God; and the verse will mean that Job's prosperity had caused him to forget God; he does not utter to Him the cry which distress would have forced from him. But apart from other difficulties the sense imposed on 'the mouth of distress' is barely possible. Duhm gets a similar general sense, avoiding the difficulty by transposition of the words, 'But freedom hath led thee away and rest from the mouth of distress, no trouble to terrify thee, and thy table full of fatness.' The word translated 'to terrify thee' is an emendation for that rendered **where there is** (*lit.* 'beneath it').

**led thee away:** marg. 'allured thee,' similarly verse 18.

Into a broad place, where there is no straitness ;
And that which is set on thy table should be full of
fatness.
But thou art full of the judgement of the wicked : 17
Judgement and justice take hold *on thee.*
Because there is wrath, beware lest thou be led away by 18
*thy* sufficiency ;
Neither let the greatness of the ransom turn thee aside.

---

**17.** This verse is very ambiguous. **The judgement of the wicked** may be either the condemnation of God uttered by the wicked, or the condemnation which overtakes the wicked. The latter seems to be the sense intended by R.V., and the connexion with verse 16 will then be, God would have led you out of distress into happiness, but, as it is, you are visited by His condemnation. If the former view is taken, the second line will form the apodosis to the first, and the meaning will be, But if you are full of wicked complaints about God, His judgements will overtake you. In that case the connexion seems to be, God is alluring you by suffering to happiness, but if you impiously complain He will condemn you. If we take verse 16 in an unfavourable sense, then this verse simply continues, and for **But** we should substitute 'And.' The connexion with verse 16 will then be, Prosperity has led you astray, and God's judgements have overtaken you. Budde omits the verse.

**art full of:** better than marg. 'hast filled up.'

**18.** The second line is fairly clear, Do not let the greatness of the ransom you have to pay, i.e. your severe sufferings (xxxiii. 24), turn you from the right path. The general sense of the first line is the same, but opinions vary much on details of interpretation. According to R.V. text, the wrath is the anger of God. The meaning seems to be, Seeing that there is such a thing as God's anger to be reckoned with, take care not to be led astray by your sufficiency. Since **sufficiency** gives no suitable sense, it would be better to read 'beware lest thou be led away into mockery.' The words might also mean, Do not, because God's anger is afflicting you, let yourself give way to mockery of Him. The parallelism favours this interpretation. The marg. takes the wrath to be Job's, 'For beware lest wrath lead thee away into mockery.' The parallelism with **ransom,** however, suggests that the reference is to Job's suffering from God's wrath, not to the angry emotions that his suffering excites, besides, the anger, as well as the mockery, would surely be reprehensible. We might, however, substitute the translation 'chastisement' for

19 Will thy riches suffice, *that thou be* not in distress,
Or all the forces of *thy* strength?
20 Desire not the night,
When peoples are cut off in their place.
21 Take heed, regard not iniquity:
For this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.

---

'sufficiency,' and with a slight emendation render 'Let not chastisement entice thee to wrath.'

**19.** The R.V. text seems to imply a reason for verse 18. Do not let the severity of your afflictions lead you astray, no smaller 'ransom' will suffice, neither wealth nor power, to rescue you from suffering. The marg. for *that thou be* **not in distress** renders 'that are without stint.' A third translation is possible 'Will thy riches suffice, without distress?' i.e. suffering is indispensable. The word rendered 'riches' may also mean 'cry,' hence the R.V. marg. 'Will thy cry avail, that thou be not in distress?' Neither cries nor your utmost efforts will deliver you. It would also be possible to make God the subject of the verb translated 'suffice,' and take the latter in its more usual sense to set in order, 'Will He set in order thy cry without distress?' i.e. Can God make your rebellious cry one of submission without afflicting you?

**20.** This verse also is very difficult. The translation seems to be a warning to Job not to long for the night of calamity when nations are suddenly cut off. But what should put such a strange desire into his mind? We might perhaps compare xviii. 4, 'shall the earth be forsaken for thee?' It can hardly be that Job desires a calamity to come upon nations that he may be destroyed; he could be destroyed without this. Rather, it is a calamity to come upon nations that some advantage may accrue to himself. Not only is this an extraordinary sentence in itself, but it is not easy to see any connexion with the context. Budde gives up the second line as hopelessly corrupt. The first he then explains, 'Do not long for death'; Job had more than once expressed the passionate wish that God would kill him out of hand. Duhm with some emendation gets the sense 'Let not folly beguile thee to exalt thyself with him that thinks himself wise.' This would suit the context much better. **are cut off** is literally 'to go up,' which might mean to exalt oneself. Ley reads 'perish.'

**21.** The sense is probably that given by R.V. Instead of **this** we should probably read 'wickedness' (*'alwāh* = *'awlāh* for *'al-zeh*). Affliction he should have gladly received at God's hands, especially in view of its blessed results. Some think we should substitute 'submissiveness.'

Behold, God doeth loftily in his power: 22
Who is a teacher like unto him?
Who hath enjoined him his way? 23
Or who can say, Thou hast wrought unrighteousness?
Remember that thou magnify his work, 24
Whereof men have sung.

---

In this section Elihu dwells on the value of suffering as discipline, and warns Job not to take it wrongly but humbly submit, else it will go worse with him. Substantially there is no advance made here.

xxxvi. 22-26. God is great and wise, who can command or criticize Him? Let Job magnify His work. He is beyond our comprehension.

xxxvi. 27-33. He draws up the water, and lets it pour down in rain. Who can understand the distribution of the clouds, the thunders in His pavilion? He is surrounded with light; judges and blesses the nations; sends the lightning to its mark, and makes His anger glow against iniquity.

xxxvii. 1-13. Elihu trembles at the thought of this. Listen to the thunder. The lightning flashes across the whole sky, and God's marvellous voice follows in the pealing thunder. His doings are incomprehensible. He sends snow and rain, stopping man's labour and driving the beasts to their dens. The storm comes from the chamber, the cold from its storehouse, and ice is formed by His breath. He fills the cloud with moisture, the lightning is guided by His direction to accomplish His destructive or merciful purposes.

xxxvii. 14-18. Let Job consider God's marvellous works. Does he comprehend these wonders? the flashing forth of the lightning, the poising of the clouds, the heat and stillness that accompany the sirocco? Can he beat out the sky firm as a metal mirror?

xxxvii. 19-24. How address a Being so great? How could one court destruction by presumptuously wishing to speak with Him? Man cannot see the dazzling light when the sky is cleared of clouds; golden radiance streams from the north, God's majesty is terrible. The Almighty is unsearchable, great in power, yet perfectly just. Men should fear Him, He has no regard for those wise in their own conceit.

xxxvi. **22.** With this begins the description of God's greatness and wisdom, which forms the concluding section of Elihu's contribution.

**24.** The author was very likely a Psalmist himself.

25 All men have looked thereon;
Man beholdeth it afar off.
26 Behold, God is great, and we know him not;
The number of his years is unsearchable.
27 For he draweth up the drops of water,
Which distil in rain from his vapour:
28 Which the skies pour down
And drop upon man abundantly.
29 Yea, can any understand the spreadings of the clouds,
The thunderings of his pavilion?
30 Behold, he spreadeth his light around him;

---

**25.** God's work is far too great for man to see it close at hand; cf. xxvi. 14. Budde strikes out the verse, merely because he thinks the connexion is better without verses 25, 26.

**26.** Both Budde and Duhm omit the first line as too like verse 22$^{a}$, the second as introducing a thought foreign to the context.

**27.** Elihu shows the greatness of God by reference to the wonders of the sky. First he names the raindrops. The meaning seems to be that the water is drawn up from the sea, and poured out as raindrops from the vapour of the clouds (marg. 'the vapour thereof').

**28.** Better 'and drop upon many men.'

**29.** Budde omits this verse and the following, quite unnecessarily. The distribution of the clouds in the sky is to Elihu a mysterious phenomenon. We should probably read, with Siegfried, 'yea, who understands.' According to Ps. xviii. 11, the darkness of the thunder-cloud is the pavilion in which God is hidden. Hence the crashing thunder within it is described as **The thunderings of his pavilion.** Probably the expression is borrowed from Ps. xviii. 11, as it is not very intelligible in itself, and only becomes so on reference to that passage.

**30.** God hides Himself in His pavilion where the thunder crashes and the lightnings play, thus He is Himself surrounded with light, the flashes which leap from the clouds being mere hints of the brilliance within, sparks from the central fire. The second line is difficult. That God should cover the bottom (*lit.* the roots) of the sea is a strange statement, it is covered already, and this objection is not removed if we explain the sea as the heavenly ocean. The marg. 'covereth *it* with the depths of the sea,' would apparently mean that God covers the light with water drawn up from the depths of the sea to form clouds, which suits

And he covereth the bottom of the sea.
For by these he judgeth the peoples ; 31
He giveth meat in abundance.
He covereth his hands with the lightning ; 32
And giveth it a charge that it strike the mark.

---

the rest of the description, but is very far-fetched. When we remember that the author has just quoted from Ps. xviii, the probability is that he is here also drawing on the same source. There, as an effect of the thunder-storm, it is described how the ocean bed was laid bare. We may read then here, with Budde, 'And the roots of the sea he lays bare.' **covereth** may have intruded here from verse 32. Marshall's suggestion, 'the roots of the sea are his throne,' is nearer the Hebrew and very ingenious. He takes the sea to be the heavenly ocean, and its roots as 'the seven mountains which were thought to surround the earth.' Duhm thinks the verse carries on the thought of 29$^a$, and reads 'Behold, he spreadeth his cloud about him, And he covereth the tops of the mountains.'

**around him :** marg. 'thereon.'

**31.** The verse breaks the connexion between verses 30 and 32. One may reasonably suspect it to be a later insertion. It would be more in place after verse 28. The judgement of the nations in itself suggests a theophany, descriptions of which are largely elemental in the O.T. We might compare Ps. xviii, or Hab. iii. This suits the present position of the line fairly well. But the reference to the bountiful supply of food in the second line should stand in connexion with the fertilizing rain. And what is the relation between the two lines? Is it antithetic, referring on one side to God's judgements executed in a theophany, and on the other to His care for His creatures? Or has the judgement both a saving and a destructive side? or is the judgement synonymous with the giving of food?

**32.** This verse is difficult, but the R. V. probably gives the sense approximately. What is meant is that God fills His hands with the lightning (*lit.* 'light') and hurls the deadly shaft of light home to its mark. But the author says, He covers His hands, to make it plain that while it is His hands that speed the bolt, the light, in which they are shrouded, conceals them from human eyes. It seemed profane to the thought of antiquity to see the Divine at work. Several other views are taken, but it is best to abide by this, nor is it necessary to make radical alterations in the text.

**that it strike the mark :** the marg. 'against the assailant' is the better translation of the Hebrew text ; but with Olshausen

33 The noise thereof telleth concerning him,
The cattle also concerning *the storm* that cometh up.
**37** At this also my heart trembleth,
And is moved out of its place.
2 Hearken ye unto the noise of his voice,
And the sound that goeth out of his mouth.
3 He sendeth it forth under the whole heaven,
And his lightning unto the ends of the earth.
4 After it a voice roareth;
He thundereth with the voice of his majesty:
And he stayeth them not when his voice is heard.

---

and several scholars it is preferable to read a slightly different word, and translate as in R.V. text.

**33.** More than thirty explanations have been given of this verse. **him** is better than the marg. 'it,' and the first line is plain, the thunder tells of God. The second line is difficult. It makes little difference whether we read *the storm* **that cometh up** or 'him that cometh up,' since if the latter is adopted, and it seems preferable, the reference is to God coming up in the storm. The explanation is given that the cattle, in virtue of a greater sensitiveness to atmospheric influences, exhibit an uneasiness which is a presage of the storm. It is also possible to translate 'unto the cattle,' in which case the meaning is that the cattle learn from the thunder concerning him that cometh up. Neither interpretation is satisfactory. The cattle are a disturbing element here, and 'him that cometh up' is a very strange phrase. In an unpointed text the latter word would be more naturally taken to mean 'wickedness,' while the word translated **cattle** might be pointed so as to mean 'kindling.' The word translated **also** is a common word for 'anger.' Accordingly we should read 'kindling his anger against iniquity,' so most scholars.

xxxvii. **2.** This verse especially makes on many the impression that a thunderstorm was in progress while Elihu was speaking, and in this is seen a preparation for the manifestation of Yahweh in xxxviii. I. If the author really intended this, he has carried out his intention inartistically, for he wanders from the thunderstorm to ice, snow, and rain.

**sound:** better as marg. '**muttering.**'

**3. lightning:** *lit.* 'light.'

**ends:** *lit.* 'skirts.'

**4.** The thunder follows the lightning. In the third line we

God thundereth marvellously with his voice ; 5
Great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.
For he saith to the snow, Fall thou on the earth ; 6
Likewise to the shower of rain,
And to the showers of his mighty rain.
He sealeth up the hand of every man ; 7
That all men whom he hath made may know *it*.
Then the beasts go into coverts, 8
And remain in their dens.
Out of the chamber *of the south* cometh the storm : 9
And cold out of the north.
By the breath of God ice is given : 10

---

should perhaps read with Budde, 'And he stayeth not the lightnings when, &c.'

**6. Fall :** so most scholars. The meaning, however, is questionable. Several read 'water the earth' (*rawwēh*), cf. Isa. lv. 10 ; Ps. lxv. 9. There has almost certainly been mistaken repetition in the second and third lines. Perhaps the best reconstruction is 'To the shower and rain Be mighty.'

**7, 8.** Snows and rain stop outdoor work, and drive the beasts to their dens, where they are forced to remain. A slight alteration would give the sense 'He shutteth men up' ($b^e$ *'adh* for $b^e$*yâdh*). So Duhm. It is amusing that the line has been regarded as a justification of palmistry.

**9.** In ix. 9 we read of 'the chambers of the south,' and the R.V. rendering has been influenced by this. There is no reference to the south here, nor is there any certain reference to **the north** in the second line, the word so translated probably meaning literally 'the scatterers,' which the marg. interprets as the 'scattering *winds*.' It is much more likely that **the chamber** is just the home in which the whirlwind was thought to dwell. And for the barely intelligible 'scatterers' in the second line it would be far better, with a trifling alteration, to read 'granaries' as proposed by Voigt. It was thought that wind, snow, hail, &c., were laid up in storehouses ready for God's use at any time when He needed them (cf. xxxviii. 22, 23 ; Ps. cxxxv. 7). This is the meaning here of 'chamber' and 'granaries.' Duhm inserts 'the south' in the text of the first line, and, retaining the text of the second, thinks of 'the scatterers' as a constellation. The Vulgate, and perhaps the LXX, identified them with Arcturus.

**10.** The nipping winter winds are apparently identified with

And the breadth of the waters is straitened.
11 Yea, he ladeth the thick cloud with moisture ;
He spreadeth abroad the cloud of his lightning :
12 And it is turned round about by his guidance,
That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them
Upon the face of the habitable world :
13 Whether it be for correction, or for his land,
Or for mercy, that he cause it to come.
14 Hearken unto this, O Job :
Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.
15 Dost thou know how God layeth *his charge* upon them,

---

the breath of God, which touches the rivers, so that they shrink as the ice covers them. But the marg. 'congealed' is better.

**11.** Possibly (with Duhm) we should read 'hail' for **moisture** (*bārādh* for *b$^e$rī*). But the present text may be defended by xxvi. 8. Budde suggests as a possibility 'with his light,' which would suit the reference to lightning in the next line, where we should perhaps read 'the cloud scattereth His lightning.'

**12.** Not the cloud, but the lightning, the same verb being used of the whirling fiery sword which, along with the cherubim, barred the way to the tree of life (Gen. iii. 24). And though the forked lightning seems to men's eyes wholly capricious in its random movements, yet it does not strike blindly, but is guided in every flash by the counsels of God. Probably the first line originally formed a couplet, and we should restore a verb corresponding to **it is turned,** perhaps 'And it moves round about, Turned by his counsels.'

**13.** The text is probably in disorder. It is clear that **land** (marg. 'earth') cannot form a third alternative to **correction** and **mercy.** It is simplest to delete **or** before **for his land** as mistaken repetition, translating 'Whether it be for correction for his land.' Duhm reads 'Whether it be for correction or for curse'; he compares Enoch lix. Budde strikes out the verse, because the connexion with verse 11 is not easy, and yet the reference to 'blessing' suits the clouds better than the lightning. It all depends on the point of view. The O. T. theophanies, in which lightning frequently plays a part, were often merciful to Israel, because destructive to its foes. And the passage quoted by Duhm from Enoch refers to the lightning as sent 'for blessing and for curse as the Lord of the spirits wills.'

**15.** In imitation of the ironical questions in the Divine speeches,

And causeth the lightning of his cloud to shine?
Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, 16
The wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?
How thy garments are warm, 17
When the earth is still by reason of the south *wind*?
Canst thou with him spread out the sky, 18

---

the author represents Elihu as plying Job with a series of questions intended to convict him of his ignorance. Budde strikes out verses 15, 16 on account of the lack of clearness and relation to the speeches of Yahweh. But few will agree that verse 17 fits on to verse 14 better than to verse 16, on the contrary, the difficulty of this connexion is decisive against the elimination of the intervening verses.

**upon them:** the reference is uncertain. Some think it is to the clouds, but more probably it is to the whole series of phenomena he has been describing. Bickell and Duhm follow the LXX in reading 'when God doeth his works.'

**16. balancings:** the word occurs only here, the meaning seems to be that the clouds are poised free in the sky, laden with moisture (verse 11), yet floating there without support. There is no need to read 'spreadings' as in xxxvi. 29. The words differ only by one letter, but 'spreadings' occurs only in that passage. For the second line Duhm reads 'That pours down a deluge mid thunder' (*mappîl tehôm m$^{e}$ra'am*). This gives an admirable sense, the clouds swing in the sky as if they were light as air, yet are filled with such a weight of water that they can discharge a deluge of rain. Something like this may be what the author *ought* to have written, the corrections required are not beyond belief, but they are enough to prevent any confident acceptance.

**17.** A very vivid touch based on the actual experience of a sirocco. For the sensation of hot clothes, and the absolute stillness of nature, see Thomson, *Land and the Book*, p. 537. The marg. renders 'Thou whose garments,' but we might perhaps still better translate 'What time thy garments.' In the second line the text is to be preferred to marg. 'When he quieteth the earth by the south *wind*.'

**18.** The reference is uncertain. Budde, taking the whole passage as describing the atmospheric phenomena that were taking place while Elihu was speaking, culminating in the theophany, thinks that the clouds hang low, flat and leaden, over the earth. The question is taken to mean, Can you make the round vault of the sky like a flat mirror? It is, however, very questionable whether the general view is correct, and the solidity implied

Which is strong as a molten mirror?
19 Teach us what we shall say unto him;
*For* we cannot order *our speech* by reason of darkness.
20 Shall it be told him that I would speak?
Or should a man wish that he were swallowed up?
21 And now men see not the light which is bright in the skies:
But the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

---

in the description does not suit the clouds. It is the firmament that is meant, as is shown by the verb translated 'spread out,' of which the Hebrew word for 'firmament' is the cognate noun. This noun means something beaten out, and the Hebrews thought of the vault of heaven as a solid expanse, firmly fixed, not like the swiftly-moving ever-changing clouds. The molten mirror was made of highly polished metal; here not the flatness but the firmness of the metal and the glitter of the surface are included in the comparison with the copper sky. Cf. Deut. xxviii. 23. Duhm places the verse before verse 21.

**with him:** not as His fellow workman, but like Him.

**19.** Awed by these instances of God's might that have crowded into his mind, Elihu asks how fitly we may address Him, with minds confused by the darkness beneath whose pall we move. The darkness is not physical, but mental.

**20.** Elihu would not dare permit that any message should be carried to God, saying that he wished to speak with Him. This would be tantamount to inviting destruction. If the text is right, there seems to be a reference to Job's oft-expressed wish to speak with God. Elihu is piously glad to be preserved from such uncanny presumption. By the omission of one consonant and the change of first into third person Duhm gets the sense 'Shall one cavil at Him when He speaketh, or does a man say that He errs?' (*yissōr* for *yᵉsuppar*). The marg. renders 'If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up.'

**21.** The meaning of the R.V. text seems to be that men cannot, on account of the intervening clouds, see the sunlight which shines above them, but a wind comes and clears the clouds away, then the light is seen. But the implied inference that the darkness which at present shrouds God's ways will soon be dissipated ('God is His own interpreter, And He will make it plain') is rather negatived by what follows. Besides, the contrast would naturally require a change in the tense. It has already been said that we should not regard this passage as describing the atmospheric phenomena during the latter part of Elihu's speech, hence that explanation should be set aside here also. We should

Out of the north cometh golden splendour : 22
God hath upon him terrible majesty.
*Touching* the Almighty, we cannot find him out ; he is 23
excellent in power :
And in judgement and plenteous justice he will not
afflict.

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translate as in the marg. 'And now men cannot look on the light when it is bright in the skies, when the wind hath passed, and cleansed them,' i. e. the light, when the sky is cleared of clouds, is too dazzling for men to look at.

**22.** The thought of the passage is, the light is too dazzling for men's eyes, how then can they look upon God? The first line may continue the description in verse 21, adding to the general mention of the dazzling light the special feature of the golden splendour that streams out of the north. The view that light comes from the north because the north wind clears away the clouds clashes with Prov. xxv. 23, 'the north wind bringeth forth rain.' The north was regarded in post-exilic Judaism as the home of God, as the Babylonians also thought (Isa. xiv. 13). The 'golden splendour' is probably therefore not to be identified with the 'light' of verse 21, but a radiance which was supposed to stream into the world from the throne of God, and give hints of the awful splendour in which He dwelt. The physical phenomenon, which has for the author this supernatural significance, was probably the Aurora Borealis. The mysterious Northern Lights may well have seemed to have their source in the dwelling-place of God.

**golden splendour :** *lit.* 'gold' ; but the view that gold is meant, and that the thought is, man can get gold from the almost inaccessible north, but he cannot find God (cf. ch. xxviii), introduces a reference alien to the context, and a connexion of gold with the north, for which no O. T. parallel can be quoted. Probably the R.V. gives the sense ; Duhm thinks the word can hardly bear this meaning, so reads with a trifling change (*zōhar* for *zāhāb*) 'brightness.'

**23.** The second line is translated in the marg. 'And to judgement and plenteous justice he doeth no violence.' The verb is probably correctly rendered, but we should divide the verse into three lines and translate, '*Touching* the Almighty we cannot find him out, He is excellent in power and in judgement, And to plenteous justice he doeth no violence.' Better still probably it would be, with transposition and a change of pointing, to read with Duhm 'He is excellent in power and plenteous in justice, And to judgement he doeth no violence.' To Job's complaint Elihu replies, True, God is inscrutable, but He is not unjust. We

24 Men do therefore fear him:
He regardeth not any that are wise of heart.

**38** [A] Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

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cannot understand His ways, but the appearance of injustice is created by our limitations, and corrected by a proper piety.

**24.** Man's true attitude is therefore a reverent humility, but to the critic of His ways, wise in his own conceit, God will pay no heed. A final attack on Job, and withal a parting thrust at the poet for representing God as speaking from the storm, instead of treating Job with disdainful silence, and as approving later of his utterances concerning Him.

The friends had asserted very strongly the greatness of God and the impossibility of understanding His ways, and Elihu follows in their footsteps. But he draws for his description of atmospheric phenomena largely on the speeches of Yahweh, but also on such a passage as xxvi. 5–14.

xxxviii. Once again we are at the poet's feet, a welcome change, more than ever to be enthralled by the spell of his genius. Here, as is fitting when the Almighty is the speaker, the poet takes his highest flight. These chapters should immediately follow ch. xxxi.

xxxviii. 1–3. Yahweh, answering Job from the storm, asks who so ignorantly makes His world-plan dark, and challenges him to the contest.

xxxviii. 4–15. Where was Job when God laid the foundations of the earth, who measured it, on what did the sockets for its pillars rest, who laid its corner stone, amid the songs of the morning stars? Who shut in the sea as it burst from the womb, clad it in clouds, and fixed its bounds? Has Job given orders to the morning, to shake the wicked from the darkness that covers them, while all things stand out in sudden sharpness, like clay under the seal, and the wicked are restrained from their crimes?

xxxviii. 16–30. Has Job visited the springs that feed the sea, or the recesses of the deep, or the realm of death? Does he know all the breadth of the earth? What is the way to the home of light and darkness? No doubt Job, coeval with them, knows it well! Has he entered the storehouses of snow and hail, prepared for God's battles? What are the paths of light and wind? Who has hewn out the channel for the torrential rain and the lightning, that rain may fall where no man dwells. What father had the rain and dew, what mother had the ice and frost, which covers the streams?

Who is this that darkeneth counsel 2

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xxxviii. 31–38. Is it Job that binds or looses the constellations, and leads them in their course? Does he know the laws which govern them, and establish their rule in the earth? Does he command the clouds and the lightning? Who has given the clouds their wisdom? Who tilts the bottles of heaven so that the rain turns the dust into clods?

xxxviii. 39—xxxix. 4. Who satisfies the hunger of lion or raven? Does Job know the wild goats' travail, when and how they bear? The young grow up swiftly and soon take care of themselves.

xxxix. 5–12. Who has given the wild ass his indomitable freedom? He dwells in the desert and scorns the city, has no driver, but seeks his food on the mountains. Will the wild ox serve Job, harrow his fields, or be trusted to bring home his harvest?

xxxix. 13–18. The ostrich leaves her eggs on the ground, forgetful that man or beast may crush them. She is cruel and careless, deprived of wisdom by God, yet she outdistances the horseman.

xxxix. 19–25. Has Job given the horse his might and quivering mane, or made him leap like a locust? Terrible is his snorting, he paws the ground, rushes undismayed to the battle, while the quiver rattles against him and the flashing weapons. He swallows the ground in his fury, and cannot be held in when he hears the trumpet, and he scents the fray from afar.

xxxix. 26–30. Is it by Job's wisdom that the hawk migrates to the south? Does the eagle soar at Job's command? She dwells on the tooth of the rock, seeking the prey with far-reaching glance, her young ones suck blood, and she is to be found by the slain.

xxxviii. **1.** There is no need to assume that the words **out of the whirlwind** were added by the author of the Elihu speeches to connect with his own description of the storm, still less are they any evidence that these speeches were the work of the poet himself. The poet needs no long-winded enumeration of the various storm phenomena, which would have weakened the force of the speech that was to follow. The simple words bring before the mind of the readers, familiar with other pictures of a theophany, the whole situation; here the thrifty speech is higher art than the most gorgeous accumulation of details. It was natural for the poet to represent Yahweh as appearing in storm, such was His manner. But he had also a special reason. Just as Job had implored God to reason with him and make clear the cause of his

By words without knowledge?
3 Gird up now thy loins like a man;
For I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?

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sufferings, nay, had even expressed the confidence that He would do so, and God on the contrary, when He speaks, overwhelms him with crushing irony, so, too, he had entreated God not to appal him with the terror of His majesty, and had also risen to the conviction that He would not contend with him in the greatness of His power, but here also God disappoints him and affrights him with the storm. Yet though He speaks out of the storm, it is not with unintelligible thunder, but 'through the thunder comes a human voice.' Cf. especially the theophany to Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 11-13.

**out of the whirlwind:** better 'out of the storm.' The Hebrew is irregularly written; Klostermann thinks it points to the dropping of a word and suggests 'out of the roaring of the storm.'

**2.** The reference is to Job, as is affirmed by the previous verse and suggested by xlii. 3. But if Elihu had been the last speaker the words ought to refer to him. This would involve the inference that the poet introduced Elihu as a speaker whose contribution was not to be taken seriously—an utterly untenable view. Accordingly this evidence very strongly confirms the view derived from the contents of the Elihu speeches, that they are a later and inharmonious addition to the poem. Yahweh condemns Job for making dark the Divine plan of the world. He had spoken as though it was all a tangled riddle. Really there is in it a beautiful luminous order. It is very instructive to compare what the author of Ecclesiastes says on this point: God has ordered all things, and each falls in place in the Divine plan of the world, but man cannot see the harmonious design, to him the world presents only a perplexing reign of caprice. But this is because God has deliberately willed that man shall not be able to find out His work; He has implanted the instinct for search, but doomed it to futility. Job has expressed the view that there is no moral order, Ecclesiastes affirms that there is an order, but God has made it impenetrable to man.

**3.** Scornfully inviting Job to the contest he had so often demanded.

**4.** Now follows a series of ironical questions intended to convict Job of ignorance touching the phenomena of nature, and therefore of incompetence to criticize God's plan. The question in this verse recalls xv. 7, cf. also verse 21. The work of creation is described as the construction of a huge building.

Declare, if thou hast understanding.
Who determined the measures thereof, if thou knowest? 5
Or who stretched the line upon it?
Whereupon were the foundations thereof fastened? 6
Or who laid the corner stone thereof;
When the morning stars sang together, 7
And all the sons of God shouted for joy?
Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, 8
When it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb;
When I made the cloud the garment thereof, 9

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**if thou hast understanding:** *lit.* 'if thou knowest understanding.'

**5. if:** marg. 'seeing,' many scholars 'that.' Was he there so as to know?

**6. foundations:** *lit.* 'sockets.' In these sockets the pillars which support the edifice are sunk.

**fastened:** *lit.* 'made to sink.' The answer to the question on what they rest is here represented as something unknown to Job; according to xxvi. 7 (see note) the earth was not supported from below, but suspended from above over empty space.

**7.** The stone-laying of the earth was celebrated with jubilant song. So when the foundation of the second temple was laid there was music and singing, and the people shouted with a great shout (Ezra iii. 10, 11; cf. Zech. iv. 7). When the world's foundation-stone was laid the stars were the choir and the angels uttered the shout of joy. The stars are here thought of as older than the earth (contrast Gen. i. 16). According to the common Hebrew view they are regarded as animated, and closely associated with the angels. The morning stars are perhaps named because the acts celebrated were supposed to take place in the morning. Since the stars are led out of their home into the sky and then, when their work is done, return, the fact that the morning stars sing indicate that the laying of the foundation-stone took place while these stars were shining.

**8.** The sea is elsewhere the turbulent power that needs to be kept under control, lest it storm heaven with its tossing waves. Here it is described when first it burst from the womb of chaos; even then God repressed it with stern control.

*as if* **it had issued:** better as in marg., 'and issued.'

**9.** For the new-born child there must be a garment and a swaddling-band; these are the clouds, which seem to be wreathed

And thick darkness a swaddlingband for it,
10 And prescribed for it my decree,
And set bars and doors,
11 And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further;
And here shall thy proud waves be stayed?
12 Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days *began*,
*And* caused the dayspring to know its place;
13 That it might take hold of the ends of the earth,
And the wicked be shaken out of it?
14 It is changed as clay under the seal;
And *all things* stand forth as a garment:

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about it on the horizon, or the mists with which it is at times covered. **thick darkness** is rather 'thick cloud.'

**10. prescribed:** *lit.* 'brake.' The word is used rather strangely, and it is questionable if it can mean to prescribe. For **decree** the marg. renders 'boundary,' and 'brake a boundary' may refer to the indentations of the coast, or the irregular high-water mark. It would be better to read 'its boundary.' Merx makes the very attractive suggestion that we should transpose this verb, reading a passive third person, and the last verb in verse 11 (reading it as a first person). Then we should translate here 'I appointed for it my decree' and in verse 11 'And thy proud waves shall be broken.' Marshall similarly, but keeping the first person active, 'And I will break thy proud waves.' Bickell, 'Here shall thy proud waves rest.'

**12.** The morning must know at what exact time each day must break, and the flush of dawn must also know at what point it must irradiate the sky.

**13.** As the dawn takes up its position, it seizes, by the light it flashes across the earth, the coverlet of darkness, in which the wicked night-prowlers are hidden, twitches it off and shakes them out. They have to scurry under shelter from the dreaded light.

**14.** Just as the flat surface of the clay is suddenly changed by the impression of a seal, which leaves upon it a well-defined image, so the dull uniformity of the earth by night is all at once changed to sharp distinctness, and stands out in clear relief under the action of the light. It is not simply the perfect clearness with which the light throws up the innumerable features that go to make up the landscape, but the suddenness of its action, the seal stamps the impression on the clay all at once. Dawn is not in Palestine the slow process it is with us. The simile of the

And from the wicked their light is withholden, 15
And the high arm is broken.
Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? 16
Or hast thou walked in the recesses of the deep?
Have the gates of death been revealed unto thee? 17
Or hast thou seen the gates of the shadow of death?
Hast thou comprehended the breadth of the earth? 18
Declare, if thou knowest it all.
Where is the way to the dwelling of light, 19
And as for darkness, where is the place thereof;

---

garment is explained by some to refer to the varied colours with which the earth is decked. The expression, however, suggests rather how the earth is clothed with its robe of verdure and trees, as a garment clings in folds to its wearer. Marg. 'as *in* a garment.'

**15. their light:** i. e. darkness, just as in xxiv. 17 morning is to them what midnight is to others. The arm raised to smite is broken.

It is unnecessary to let verses 19, 20 follow, on account of community of subject.

**16. the springs of the sea** are the fountains of the great deep. The sea has burst forth from the subterranean ocean, which still feeds it, inasmuch as in the bed of the sea there are openings connecting with the abyss beneath. When these fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven opened through which the waters of the heavenly ocean, the 'waters above the firmament,' poured down, the Deluge was the result (Gen. vii. 11). It was brought to an end by stopping the fountains of the abyss and shutting the windows in the sky (Gen. viii. 2).

**recesses:** marg. and A. V. 'search,' cf. xi. 7. The text rendering gives the sense.

**17.** Below these 'recesses' lies Sheol, the home of the dead, cf. xxvi. 5. Job knows nothing of it, but in xxvi. 6 it is said to be bare to God's gaze. For the dense gloom of Sheol see x. 21, 22. The repetition of **gates** is awkward, perhaps we should point differently with the LXX and read 'warders.' The LXX has also the variant in the second line, 'Have the warders of the shadow of death affrighted thee'? which reminds one of the representations of Cerberus.

**18.** From depth God passes on to breadth; if Job's researches have not extended in one direction perhaps they have in another?

**19.** Light is described, says Cheyne, 'as a mysterious physical

20 That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof,
And that thou shouldest discern the paths to the house
thereof?
21 *Doubtless*, thou knowest, for thou wast then born,
And the number of thy days is great!
22 Hast thou entered the treasuries of the snow,
Or hast thou seen the treasuries of the hail,
23 Which I have reserved against the time of trouble,
Against the day of battle and war?
24 By what way is the light parted,
Or the east wind scattered upon the earth?
25 Who hath cleft a channel for the waterflood,

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essence, dwelling in a secret place.' This applies also to darkness. Cf. xxvi. 10.

**20. discern:** probably with Hoffmann we should read 'bring it to the paths,' pointing differently and perhaps inserting a consonant. We thus improve the parallelism.

**21.** Cf. verse 4, xv. 7.

**22.** See note on xxxvii. 9. The repetition of **treasuries** is strange. Duhm thinks that, as in verse 17, the word should be slightly corrected to give the sense of the keeper of the treasury. We read of such functionaries in Enoch, which supplies a good many parallels here. Hail frequently plays a part in descriptions of battle or judgements, e. g. Joshua x. 11; Isa. xxviii. 17, xxx. 30; Ps. xviii. 12, 13; Ezek. xiii. 13.

**24.** Marg. 'Which is the way *to the place where* the light is, &c.' The meaning is thought to be by what way do light and wind spread over the earth with such mysterious swiftness. The text, however, probably needs correction. The bracketing together of light and wind is strange, especially when the light has been dealt with already (verse 19). Many scholars substitute 'wind' for 'light.' A much easier emendation is Hoffmann's 'mist' (*'ēd* as in Gen. ii. 6). Duhm completes this by reading *qārīm* for *qādīm*, an infinitesimal change, 'or the fresh water scattered on the earth.' This leads up well to the next verse. We should have expected the wind to be included; still, there is no attempt at completeness, the rainbow, for example, is not mentioned.

**25. the waterflood** is the torrential rain, which is supposed to pour from the upper ocean down a 'channel' specially cleft for it by God through the vault of the sky. So the lightning has a

Or a way for the lightning of the thunder ;
To cause it to rain on a land where no man is ; 26
On the wilderness, wherein there is no man ;
To satisfy the waste and desolate *ground* ; 27
And to cause the tender grass to spring forth ?
Hath the rain a father ? 28
Or who hath begotten the drops of dew ?
Out of whose womb came the ice ? 29
And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it ?
The waters are hidden as *with* stone, 30
And the face of the deep is frozen.

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track along which it has to shoot. The second line has been repeated by the author of xxviii. 26.

**26, 27.** Very important for the poet's attitude to the problem. The fault of Job is that he is self-centred. The world is cruel, immorally governed, because he suffers. He widens his view and brings, as a further indictment against God, the misery of mankind. Beyond that he does not look. But God's concerns embrace far more than man. Otherwise why slake the arid desert's thirst, or cause the fresh herbage to spring forth there, where no man's need can ever be satisfied by it, where no man's eye will ever rest upon it ? It is not merely Job's ignorance of things that he could not know, it is his narrow outlook, that makes him oblivious of much that is plain, for which Yahweh rebukes him.

**tender grass** : marg. 'greensward.' The literal rendering is 'And to cause the place of tender grass to sprout forth.' We should, with G. H. B. Wright, transpose two consonants (reading *tsāmē* 'thirsty land' for *mōtsā'* 'place') and render 'And to cause the thirsty land to bring forth tender grass.'

**28.** Struck out by Bickell and Duhm as a variant of verse 29, and intolerable after so much has been said about the rain. Still, the dew is nowhere else mentioned.

**29. gendered it** : if verse 28 is omitted, this is the more natural translation. If, however, it be retained, the marg. 'given it birth' is preferable, verse 28 speaking of the father, verse 29 of the mother.

**30.** Frost is more marvellous to an Oriental than to ourselves. The reader of *The Talisman* will remember how the hero seeks to convince his apparently incredulous hearer of the possibility of such a phenomenon. The marg. renders 'are congealed like

31 Canst thou bind the cluster of the Pleiades,
Or loose the bands of Orion?
32 Canst thou lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season?
Or canst thou guide the Bear with her train?

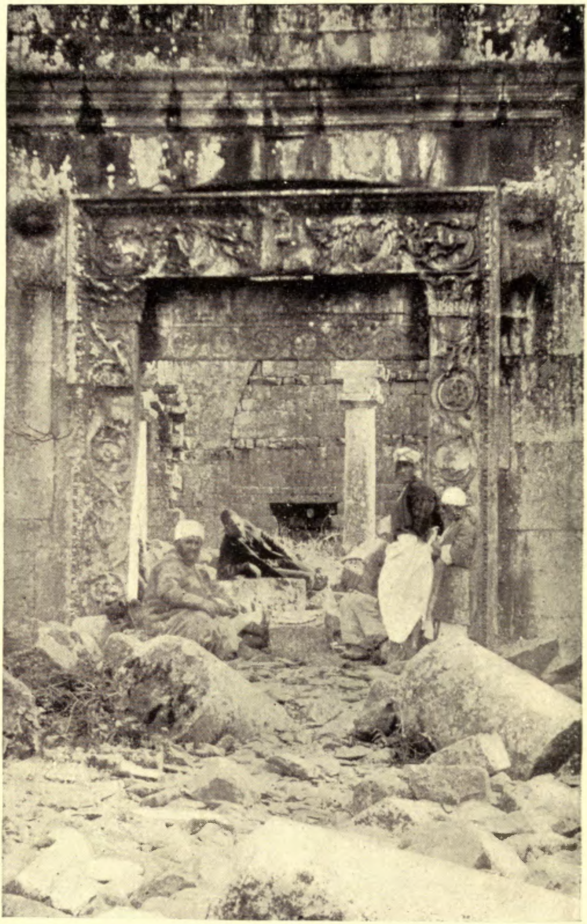
---

stone,' and several take this view, which, however, imposes a dubious meaning on the word. The rendering in the text gives no satisfactory sense; the waters can hardly be said to hide themselves by becoming like stone, that is, by transformation into ice. It is probably best, with Merx and some other scholars, to transpose the verbs and read 'The waters are frozen like stone, and the face of the deep is hidden.' The face of the deep is the surface of the water that flows under the ice.

**31. Canst** gives a wrong suggestion, render 'dost'; is it Job who binds or loosens? For **cluster** the marg. gives 'chain,' and as a further alternative 'sweet influences. The latter is the A. V. rendering, and may be safely set aside on philological grounds. If we accept the rendering **Pleiades** either 'cluster' or 'chain' gives a good sense, the former referring to the binding of the stars into a cluster, the latter apparently to the binding of the stars so that their freedom of movement is limited. Possibly, however, Canis Major is meant, and in that case the reference is to the chain by which the dog of Orion is held in leash. In favour of the identification with Orion's dog is the mention of Orion himself in the next line (if that identification is correct). What is meant by the bands of Orion is not clear. Burney explains it of bonds in which he is thought to have been chained by the Deity: 'If man can loose these bands—the poet seems to mean—he may then hope to gain control over those changes in the season which the constellation marks' (*EBi.* col. 4782). But this implies the translation 'canst' instead of 'dost.' It is implied that God does loose the bands of Orion. The meaning is not clear. Orion seems to have been one of the giants, who for rebellion against God was lashed by Him to the sky. Perhaps the thought is that in spite of his turbulent character the Almighty relaxes his bands, because, however dangerous he may be, God can, when He will, contemptuously leave him at large. Job, if he could, would not dare to do this.

**32. Mazzaroth:** the sense is unknown. Some think of 'the signs of the Zodiac (so marg.). But while the word itself is plural, it is referred to as a singular (**in their season** is *lit.* 'in its season'). It is therefore probably a constellation, but whether the Hyades or some other may be left undetermined. Several views may be seen in Dillmann or Marshall.

**train:** Heb. 'sons,' the stars corresponding to what we should call the horses in Charles's Wain. But we might with



The Sanctuary of Job—Kanawāt.

Knowest thou the ordinances of the heavens? 33
Canst thou establish the dominion thereof in the earth?
Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, 34
That abundance of waters may cover thee?
Canst thou send forth lightnings, that they may go, 35
And say unto thee, Here we are?
Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? 36
Or who hath given understanding to the mind?
Who can number the clouds by wisdom? 37

---

Merx point differently and translate 'Dost thou comfort the Bear over her sons.' There would be a reference to some myth of the Bear having lost her children, otherwise unknown to us. See note on ix. 9 for the identification.

**33. the ordinances of the heavens** seem to mean the laws which guide the movements of the heavenly bodies. Cheyne reads 'the pictures of heaven,' i.e. the signs of the Zodiac (*EBi.* col. 2989). We might point the verb as a Piel (as in verse 12), 'Dost thou make the heavens to know the laws?' i.e. do you lay down the laws which the heavens must obey? This is confirmed by the parallelism, and the following verse. The second line refers to the dominion exercised by the heavenly bodies over the affairs of earth (cf. Gen. i. 14–18).

**34.** The second line occurs also in xxii. 11. The sense is not very good; perhaps we should read with the LXX 'that abundance of water may answer thee.' The present text may very well have been altered under the influence of xxii. 11.

**36.** It is clear that **inward parts** and **mind** are wholly out of place in this context, and that some meteorological phenomena must be referred to. What these are is very uncertain, since the second term occurs nowhere else, and the first may or may not be the same word that we find in Ps. li. 6 (there also translated 'inward parts'). If it is, the idea in both cases is probably that of darkness. Hence here we should translate, as in marg., 'dark clouds,' a view taken by many scholars. Duhm translates 'feathery clouds.' For 'mind' the marg. gives 'meteor.' Others think of the various cloud-formations; we might perhaps translate 'cloud-rack' in that case; others again of the comet, or the Aurora Borealis. In any case they possess wisdom, either in the sense that men can draw auguries from them, or that they prognosticate the weather.

**37.** The reference to the numbering of the clouds is rather unexpected, and the explanation that so the right number is

Or who can pour out the bottles of heaven,
38 When the dust runneth into a mass,
And the clods cleave fast together?
39 Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lioness?
Or satisfy the appetite of the young lions,
40 When they couch in their dens,
*And* abide in the covert to lie in wait?
41 Who provideth for the raven his food,
When his young ones cry unto God,
*And* wander for lack of meat?

---

always employed for the purpose somewhat artificial. G. H. B. Wright reads 'breaks'; Duhm's emendation 'spreads out' would be better (*yiphrōs*).

**pour out:** *lit.* 'cause to lie down.' The clouds are thought of as skins full of water (xxvi. 8); as they are tilted the water streams out in the form of rain.

**38.** It is not clear whether the meaning is that the rain thus descends when through drought the clods are baked hard, or whether that as a consequence of the rain the soil, turned to powder by the heat, is transformed into clods. The latter is probably to be preferred.

**39.** The poet now passes to the second great division of the speech, and rapidly sketches a series of inimitable pictures from the animal creation. A new chapter should have begun here.

First of all God names the lion. Is it Job who scours the country to beat up its prey, while it remains inactive in its den, or waits in the thicket till the prey passes so close that it may pounce on it? Far from it; he would sooner slay the robber of the herd than drive its prey into its clutches. Yet the lion, as well as man, is the object of God's loving care, and the needful food is provided for it. Perhaps it is the lioness that remains in the den with the cubs, and the young lions that lurk in the covert till God brings the prey in reach of their spring. Cf. Ps. civ. 20-22.

**41.** The raven might have been expected in connexion with the hawk and the eagle, rather than interpolated among the quadrupeds. Yet the contrast between the king of the forest and these lowly fowl of the air, both alike cared for by God, is very effective. Cf. Ps. cxlvii. 9; Luke xii. 24. G. H. B. Wright however, points the word translated **raven** so as to mean 'evening' 'Who provideth at evening its food?' In that case it is still the lion that is referred to. Duhm accepts this, but inserts a line

Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock 39
bring forth?
*Or* canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?
Canst thou number the months that they fulfil? 2
Or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?
They bow themselves, they bring forth their young, 3
They cast out their sorrows.
Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up in the 4
open field;
They go forth, and return not again.
Who hath sent out the wild ass free? 5

---

before the third to complete the parallelism, 'When the young lions roar after prey' (from Ps. civ. 21), and in the fourth line reads with the LXX 'to seek for meat.'

xxxix. **1.** The word translated **wild goats** is masculine; if the text is right, we must suppose that the form is used as a feminine. Duhm very cleverly emends the text 'Dost thou teach the wild goats of the rock heat?' The word occurs only Deut. vii. 13, and is of dubious sense. On this the next line follows naturally, only it would be better to translate 'Dost thou watch over the calving of the hinds?' The present text is not likely to be right, since it is substantially repeated in the next verse. Bickell, followed by Budde, omits the word translated **the time when** as incorrect dittography of the last two letters of the preceding word, 'Dost thou know the bringing forth of the wild goats.' This mitigates the difficulties.

**2.** Perhaps we should render 'Dost thou number the months they should fulfil? Or dost thou prescribe the time when they should bring forth?' It is not simply Job's ignorance of these inaccessible creatures, but the fact that he does not appoint their course of life. God knows, but He also exercises an active control. No single detail in the lot of the lowliest member of the vast universe escapes His immediate care. The lesson of the Sermon on the Mount also; but Jesus adds 'ye are of more value than many sparrows.'

**3.** The ease of their parturition; they are soon delivered and rid of their birth-pangs.

**4. return not again:** better as in marg. 'return not unto them,' i. e. they rapidly become independent of the parents' help; God so prospers their growth.

**5–8.** The wild ass is the supreme example of a creature

Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?
6 Whose house I have made the wilderness,
And the salt land his dwelling place.
7 He scorneth the tumult of the city,
Neither heareth he the shoutings of the driver.
8 The range of the mountains is his pasture,
And he searcheth after every green thing.
9 Will the wild-ox be content to serve thee?
Or will he abide by thy crib?
10 Canst thou bind the wild-ox with his band in the furrow?
Or will he harrow the valleys after thee?
11 Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great?
Or wilt thou leave to him thy labour?

---

inspired with a passionate love of liberty, all the more so in contrast to its drudge of a brother. Civilization it loathes, and will not be robbed of the wild free life of the desert. The poet's sympathy throbs in his scorn and enthusiasm. The land 'where no man is' (xxxviii. 26), there is the ideal home, far from the fret and throng of the city, free from the tyranny of its conventions. No cramped city hovel, but the wide wilderness for a home, no driver to urge him with curses to his work, the wild ass lives his own life, finding exhilarating exercise for his powers in fleet scouring of the mountain ranges for its food. To the world-weary poet how enviable a life!

The Hebrew has different words for **wild ass** in verse 5; the second is the Aramaic term.

**6.** The steppe and the salt land are the extreme opposite of the fruitful lands. The wild ass contrives to live there, and must, if he would be free from men. Salt is a welcome ingredient in its diet.

**7. driver:** marg. 'taskmaster.'

**9.** The identification of the wild-ox is a matter of much dispute, which fortunately is of little moment for the appreciation of the poem. It must have resembled the tame ox in appearance to point the contrast, and it must have been incapable of domestication. The margin refers to Num. xxiii. 22, where the margin gives 'ox-antelope.'

**10.** It would be better to eliminate **the wild-ox** as mistaken repetition from verse 9 and read 'Wilt thou bind him with his furrow rope?'

Wilt thou confide in him, that he will bring home thy seed, 12
And gather *the corn of* thy threshing-floor?
The wing of the ostrich rejoiceth; 13

**13.** The whole description of the ostrich, verses 13–18, is absent in the LXX, and omitted by Hatch, Bickell, Duhm, and Beer. Even Dillmann admits that it is perhaps an interpolation. Its presence among descriptions of quadrupeds, the awkwardness in a speech of God of the reference to God in the third person, especially the absence of the interrogative form of address, are the reasons urged against it. These are weighty, but not decisive. Absence in the LXX may be due to difficulty of translation or objection to the contents of the passage. The interrogative form is sometimes abandoned after the introduction to the descriptions (e. g. verses 3, 4; 6–8; 21–25; 28–30). The difficulty of its complete absence here is real, but this mitigates it somewhat. For the reference to God in the third person cf. xl. 9; still, verse 17 might at need be omitted. The omission of the whole passage would be a distinct loss to the speech. But it is quite possible that originally it stood in connexion with the other descriptions of birds, either after that of the hawk or that of the eagle. The transference to its present position before the passage on the horse is readily accounted for by the mention of the horse in the last line (verse 18).

The word for **ostrich** occurs nowhere else, possibly a more usual word should be read; there is no question that the ostrich is meant. The word translated **rejoiceth** is not found elsewhere in this conjugation. It is thought to mean 'beats proudly' or 'joyously.' The word is not very appropriate in the case of the ostrich, and has no special fitness in the context. Duhm reads 'is perverse' (*n*$^{e}$*lōzāh*), which gives a fair parallel with the next line. G. H. B. Wright emends the second line very ingeniously, getting the sense 'Does the wing of the ostrich soar aloft, Or is it strong on the wing like the stork and the falcon?' He places the passage after verse 30, and thus secures a contrast with the eagle placing its nest high on the rock. The ostrich cannot soar aloft, but must leave its eggs on the ground. Ley, with slight emendations (*niqlāsā* and *ḥasira*), renders 'The wing of the ostrich is mocked; Are its pinions and feathers too short?' In that case the point lies in the incongruity between the huge size of the ostrich and the ludicrous shortness of its wings. With wings so short it cannot hatch its eggs like other birds, yet in spite of this it moves so swiftly in flight that it mocks its swiftest pursuers. There is a fine contrast between the mockery to which the ostrich is exposed and the mockery with which she baffles her

*But* are her pinions and feathers kindly?
14 For she leaveth her eggs on the earth,
And warmeth them in the dust,
15 And forgetteth that the foot may crush them,
Or that the wild beast may trample them.
16 She is hardened against her young ones, as if they were not hers:
Though her labour be in vain, *she is* without fear;

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pursuers, all the more that the despised wings help her to turn the tables on the scoffers. The chief objection to this is perhaps that it seems to require the omission of verse 17, for the neglect of her eggs is due not to a divinely ordered stupidity, but to inability to hatch them. Still, verse 17 is objectionable on account of the reference to God in the third person. The passage in its present form does not hang well together, for verse 18 stands in no intimate connexion with what has gone before, but simply mentions another characteristic. That the ostrich out-distances the horseman should, however, be a surprising testimony to creative wisdom, and this we get if the contrast be between the tiny wings and the speed of her flight. To fly so swiftly with wings so short—the efficiency of the inadequate is a marvel of Divine skill. The proverbial unkindness of the ostrich to its young (see next note) may have led to the misreading of the original text.

**kindly:** cf. Lam. iv. 3, where the people under stress of famine, worse even than the jackals that do at least suckle their young, 'is become cruel like the ostriches in the wilderness.' The word is used for the stork, on account of its kindness to its young. Hence the marg. '*like* the stork's.' While the margin does not give the probable translation, yet if the text is right the word is probably chosen to suggest a contrast with the stork.

**14.** The ostrich lays all her eggs before 'sitting,' and often leaves them unprotected even after she has begun to brood, but towards the end of the period does not leave the nest at all. Other eggs are laid outside the nest, these are not hatched, but form food for the young. It was commonly believed that she did not brood at all, and probably this belief was shared by the poet.

**15.** Really the shells are very hard, so that there is little danger of their being crushed.

**16.** The marg. renders 'She dealeth hardly with.' The term **young ones** is used proleptically. It is the eggs, strictly speaking, that she abandons. The second line is not clear. The

Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, 17
Neither hath he imparted to her understanding.
What time she lifteth up herself on high, 18
She scorneth the horse and his rider.
Hast thou given the horse *his* might? 19
Hast thou clothed his neck with the quivering mane?

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meaning is apparently that it gives her no concern if her labour of laying the eggs should all prove in vain. Dillmann explains this by the fact that the ostrich will often destroy the eggs herself if she sees man or beast near them. Others explain that she apprehends no danger, and therefore abandons her eggs to their fate; they may get hatched, but they may fail, in which case her labour has all been in vain.

**17.** The stupidity of the ostrich is as proverbial in the East as her cruelty. If the verse is genuine, it must account not for her laying the eggs on the ground, but for leaving them to the risks of her absence.

**18.** Dillmann thinks the point is, that the ostrich has another wonderful quality, though it is a bird, it does not fly, but runs like a quadruped, and is, indeed, swifter than the horse. This makes the main point to be something not mentioned at all. The quality made prominent is the swiftness of movement. This forms no good contrast to the preceding context, for few will see in her swiftness the strange contradiction to her cruelty and foolishness which Davidson discerns. Swiftness and cruelty are often associated, e. g. 'Their horses also are swifter than leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves' (Hab. i. 8), and why should speed and stupidity be incongruous qualities? More probably, as already pointed out (see note on verse 13), the contradiction lies in the shortness of wing and the swiftness of pace. The words **on high** naturally suggest flight, but since the ostrich does not fly, but runs, though accelerating her speed with tail and wings, some think the text should be corrected. Wright, followed by Budde, reads 'When the archers come,' which involves little alteration. The text, however, gives a fairly good sense. She strains aloft, though actually she does not rise from the ground.

**19. the quivering mane:** so most scholars. The word does not occur elsewhere, the marg. says 'Heb. shaking.' Some think that it is the whole quivering of the neck in the excitement of battle that is meant. The A. V. followed several versions in rendering 'Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?' It was unlucky for Carlyle that the A. V. betrayed him into selecting this magnificent nonsense to illustrate the poet's truthfulness of

20 Hast thou made him to leap as a locust?
The glory of his snorting is terrible.
21 He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength:
He goeth out to meet the armed men.
22 He mocketh at fear, and is not dismayed;
Neither turneth he back from the sword.
23 The quiver rattleth against him,
The flashing spear and the javelin.
24 He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage;
Neither believeth he that it is the voice of the trumpet.
25 As oft as the trumpet *soundeth* he saith, Aha!
And he smelleth the battle afar off,
The thunder of the captains, and the shouting.
26 Doth the hawk soar by thy wisdom,
*And* stretch her wings toward the south?
27 Doth the eagle mount up at thy command,

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observation. The phrase is splendid but unmeaning. Carlyle's dictum was as just as his illustration was unfortunate.

**20.** Cf. Joel ii. 4; Rev. ix. 7, where the comparison is reversed.

**21.** Heb. 'they paw,' but the singular should probably be read. Perhaps we should connect **in his strength** with **He goeth out.**

**the armed men:** marg. 'the weapons,' which is more literal.

**23. against:** much better as in marg. 'upon.'

**24.** The second line seems to mean that it is too good to be true. But scholars generally prefer the marg. 'Neither standeth he still at the sound of the trumpet,' but it is not clear whether the meaning is when the trumpet sounds a halt or a retreat, or when it sounds the advance.

**25. smelleth the battle,** as we speak of scenting the fray. The verb does not suit the next line; the text may be incomplete, but prosaic precision is not to be expected, and the verse is highly effective as it stands.

**26.** Did Job implant in the hawk the migratory instinct, that prompts it, as winter is coming on, to leave for a warmer climate? Cf. Jer. viii. 7. We might translate, 'to the south wind,' in which case the reference would not be to the presage of winter, but to the strength of wing that enabled it to fly in the teeth of the south wind.

**27.** It is rather strange that only a couplet should be devoted

And make her nest on high?
She dwelleth on the rock, and hath her lodging *there*, 28
Upon the crag of the rock, and the strong hold.
From thence she spieth out the prey; 29
Her eyes behold it afar off.
Her young ones also suck up blood: 30
And where the slain are, there is she.

[M] Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said, **40**

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to the hawk. It would be hazardous, however, to infer with Bickell and Duhm that verses 27–30 also belong to the description of the hawk, and that we should eliminate the mounting up of the eagle, reading simply 'Doth she at thy command make her nest on high?' As the lion opens the series, it is fitting that the eagle should close it. The second line is short and bald in the Hebrew, perhaps with Budde we might read 'And make her nest high on the mountains.'

**30.** Cf. Matt. xxiv. 28.

xl. 1—xlii. 6. This passage opens with a brief challenge to Job, driving home the lesson of the preceding speech. Job replies that he is too insignificant, and will no longer contend with God. Then follows a second speech of Yahweh, to which Job replies in penitence and self-loathing. Not all of this second speech can be the composition of the poet. Most scholars are agreed that the descriptions of behemoth and leviathan, xl. 15—xli. 34, are a later addition. They are unsuitable in their present connexion. The main point dealt with here is Job's denial of the Divine righteousness and attempt to substantiate his own, and to this the lengthy description of these monsters seems irrelevant. It might, indeed, be said that Job is also asked whether he has might like God, and is challenged to clothe himself with majesty and subdue the evils of the world. From this point of view these sections might seem to be in place, for if Job cannot tame two of God's creatures, how can he match himself with God, or how undertake the moral government of the universe, which would require him to cope successfully with the forces of evil? But God's might and Job's weakness is a subordinate thought; the main point attacked is Job's criticism of God's righteousness, and the passages in dispute divert attention from this to a secondary issue. Moreover, while the main theme occupies but a few verses, these descriptions fill forty-four verses; thus all sense of proportion is lost. Secondly, inasmuch as they describe animals, their place would have been

2 [A] Shall he that cavilleth contend with the Almighty?

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with the animal pictures in xxxviii. 39—xxxix. 30. But they would be quite out of place there. There the sections devoted to each animal are quite short, here behemoth has ten verses, while leviathan has no less than thirty-four. And the difference in length is not so striking as the difference in form. Here the descriptions are heavy and laboured, gaining their effect, such as it is, by an accumulation of details, a catalogue of their points and minute descriptions of the various parts of their bodies. But the poet who gave us the pictures of the wild ass, the horse, and the eagle was a swift impressionist, springing imagination with a touch, not stifling it with the fullness of detail proper to a natural historian. The interrogative form, which for the most part is found in these earlier pictures, is here for the most part absent. Thirdly, it is generally agreed that the execution is less artistic and the style inferior. It ought, however, to be said that so accomplished a stylist as Renan expressed a more favourable judgement. He says the style is that of the best parts of the poem, and everything indicates that the section came from the writer of the rest of the speeches of Yahweh, though not written at the same time. The truth is that the style is unequal. Some scholars (e. g. Budde) mitigate the objection by striking out xli. 12–34 as a later addition. This is based on the correct observation that these verses are the weakest part of this section from a literary point of view, xli. 12 especially being intolerably out of place in a speech of Yahweh, though the text is probably corrupt. What is then left of the description of leviathan, xli. 1–11, is much nearer to the other animal passages, and like them is thrown into the form of questions. Still, it is appreciably longer, though this objection would be almost entirely removed if xli. 9–11 did not properly form part of it. But the description of behemoth, while not incredibly long, remains open to the two objections that the enumeration of parts of the body is prominent, and that the interrogative form of address is entirely absent. No insuperable objection could have been taken to xli. 1–11 (or 1–8), if it had been associated with the other animal pictures. But since the reasons given suffice to prove that the rest of the description of leviathan and the whole passage about behemoth are later additions, we should probably accept the same conclusion as to xli. 1–11, on the grounds that behemoth and leviathan can hardly be separated, and that it is found in its present context, and not in ch. xxxix. It is, no doubt, difficult, as Cornill urges, to think that the second speech of Yahweh consisted simply of xl. 7–14. Yet the utmost that could be inferred from this would be that the speech was originally longer, not that the behemoth and leviathan sections must have formed part of it. Yet even this is

He that argueth with God, let him answer it.

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not at all necessary. By so short a speech the poet may have intended to show that Job now needed but little to bring him fully to the state of mind which Yahweh desired to produce. It is, however, also possible that, with the intrusion of these sections, the original order has been in other respects disturbed. It is a little surprising that we have a double confession by Job. Possibly xl. 3–5 was originally connected with xlii. 2–6. In that case it would not be unlikely that what has been regarded as a second speech of Yahweh ought to be regarded as the conclusion of the first. The introductory formulae, xl. 1, 6, would then be later insertions, and the same judgement would have to be passed on xl. 7, which is borrowed from xxxviii. 3. The original conclusion would then consist of xl. 2, 8–14, while Job's reply with its introductory formula would consist of xl. 3–5, xlii. 2–6 (see further note on xl. 4). This, while probable, is nevertheless less certain than the fact that the behemoth and leviathan passages formed no part of the poet's work. They were added subsequently by a writer who thought the omnipotence of Yahweh could be more successfully illustrated by these monsters than by the examples which the poet had chosen. This writer, while much inferior to the poet, was considerably superior in literary gift to the author of the Elihu speeches.

xl. 1, 2, 6–14. Will Job contend with God? then let him answer God's questions. Will he make good his own case by imputing unrighteousness to God? Is he as powerful as God? If so let him deck himself with Divine majesty and crush the proud. Then God will confess that his right hand can save him.

xl. 15–24, xli. 9–12. Let Job consider behemoth, a creature of God like himself, mighty in strength, first of God's ways, ruler of his fellows, depasturing the mountains, sleeping under the lotus, undismayed at the violence of the torrent, who can successfully assail him? Vain is the hope of subduing him, none can stand before him, or assail him and be safe.

xli. 1–8, 13–34. Can leviathan be caught and led by a rope? Would he entreat favour, or purchase his life by bondage? Could one make a pet or plaything of him? Would the merchants bargain over him? Can he be harpooned? Let him that would attempt this bethink himself in time, he would have no chance of repeating his experiment. Could any strip off his cover, or open the mouth, whose teeth are terrible. His back is all scales, inseparably fitted together. The spray from his nostrils is like a stream of light, his eyes luminous as the dawn, his breath is a fire. His neck is strong, he strikes terror wherever he goes. His flesh and heart are firm and hard. All attacks on him are futile, he mocks at all weapons.

3 Then Job answered the LORD, and said,
4 Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee?
I lay mine hand upon my mouth.
5 Once have I spoken, and I will not answer;
Yea twice, but I will proceed no further.

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His scales beneath are sharp as potsherds, his track in the mire like that of a threshing sledge. He beats the sea into foam. He has not his peer on earth, fearless and dreaded by the strongest, the king of all beasts.

xl. 3-5, xlii. 1-6. Job confesses his insignificance, and will speak no more. God, he knows, can do all things; he has spoken presumptuously of things he did not comprehend. He had heard of God by report only, now he beholds Him, so in self-abhorrence he repents in dust and ashes.

**2.** Will God's critic still contend with Him? He has no right to do it unless he can answer the questions God has propounded.

**4.** This follows well on verse 2. Feeling his own insignificance in the presence of God and all the wonders of His universe, Job cannot any longer contend with God. If the present arrangement of verses is right there is force in Marshall's view that what we have here is nothing more than 'a mere dogged submission to authority.' Hence the necessity of a second Divine speech to bring him to the right temper of mind. It is, however, difficult to accept, since the second speech seems no better adapted than the first to produce the desired result; moreover, what really brings Job back to God in penitence and humility is not so much what God says to him in the first or second speech as the vision of God Himself. Accordingly we should probably see here the same temper expressed as in xlii. 2-6. Only in that case a speech of Yahweh in the tone of xl. 7-14 is not quite what we should have expected. When Job has confessed his error, such rebuke comes perilously near nagging. Hence we may very plausibly infer that verses 2, 8-14 should immediately follow xxxix. 30, and that the single speech of Yahweh was followed by a single speech from Job consisting of xl. 4, 5, xlii. 2-6 (see introduction to this section). For Job's 'I am of small account' one might compare the very striking experience under an imperfectly given anaesthetic, in James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 'And yet, on waking, my first feeling was, and it came with tears, "*Domine non sum digna,*" for I had been lifted into a position for which I was too small' (p. 392).

**5. answer:** many correct the text slightly and read 'I will do so no more.'

[**M**] Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, 6
and said,
Gird up thy loins now like a man: 7
I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
[**A**] Wilt thou even disannul my judgement? 8
Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be justified?
Or hast thou an arm like God? 9
And canst thou thunder with a voice like him?
Deck thyself now with excellency and dignity; 10
And array thyself with honour and majesty.
Pour forth the overflowings of thine anger: 11
And look upon every one that is proud, and abase him.

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**6, 7.** Probably inserted when verses 2, 8–14 were detached from their original position, and with the addition of xl. 15—xli. 34 transformed into a second Divine speech. Verse 7 is repeated from xxxviii. 3.

**8.** Probably stood originally closely in connexion with verse 2. **disannul my judgement**: the words mean, discredit my righteousness. Job felt that either God or he must be unrighteous; since he was conscious that it was not himself, it must be God.

9–13. Job has challenged God's righteousness. This righteousness should find its sphere in the control of the universe; Job has failed to find it there. But who is he to pose as God's critic? Could he take God's place? For that he would need strength to crush the proud and the wicked. For such a task he is incompetent; but if he cannot do God's work, what right has he to say God does not do it well? He is a critic from the outside, he needs a knowledge of the conditions, such as can be gained only through actual experience of the task God has to accomplish. From such a knowledge his human frailty for ever excludes him, let him recognize the true inference, that he can never have the right to impugn God's action. It is often explained that the thought in these verses is that the supreme ruler must be righteous since the function assigned to Him is to abase the proud and trample down the wicked. This does not necessarily follow. It is what the rule of the world meant to Job; were he the ruler, so he would act. The invitation is accommodated to his point of view. The question whether He is Himself righteous in His government God does not condescend to discuss. The point He makes against Job is simply that it is foolish for him to find fault

12 Look on every one that is proud, *and* bring him low;
And tread down the wicked where they stand.
13 Hide them in the dust together;
Bind their faces in the hidden *place*.
14 Then will I also confess of thee
That thine own right hand can save thee.

---

with the course of the world, unless he is competent to play Providence himself.

**12.** The first line is almost the same as the second line of verse 11. Such repetition is unlikely, here especially; the existence of the variants, **abase him** and **bring him low**, probably led to the rest of the line being repeated with the second variant.

**13. the hidden** *place*: apparently Sheol.

**14.** The turn of phrase is unexpected. We should rather anticipate that God would then confess that Job was worthy to take His place. This, however, is not at all what God says, but rather that Job's right hand could save him. It is, no doubt, true that we often read of Yahweh's arm as saving Him (Isa. lix. 16, lxiii. 5; Ps. xcviii. 1) or His people (Ps. xliv. 3). But it would be a wholly unjustified inference that, when applied to a man, it attributed Divine power to him. The precise significance is hard to understand. Is God thinking of Job's many proud boasts of innocence, culminating in the splendidly bold utterance with which his great self-vindication had drawn to its close? If you would abase the proud, you must begin at home, then when you had subdued your own arrogance, I could praise you as able to save yourself. This self-salvation might be scornful irony, for the measure Job would mete out to the proud was no salvation, but a trampling into Sheol (verse 13). Were he the inexorably just judge, he must condemn himself. It might be seriously meant, however, first you would judge and subdue your pride, then you would justly deliver yourself from evil. Or is God contrasting the clean sweep Job would soon make of wickedness if he had the power, with the long indulgence which He Himself extended to it? The meddlesome reformer may mar by his haste what he seeks to mend; God praises him sarcastically, his right hand can save him, but can it save the world? (contrast Mark xv. 31). If this is the meaning, an answer is suggested to the question why God does not sweep evil away. It is not that God is more tolerant of it than man. But His hate of it makes Him seem the more tolerant, for He knows that premature triumph would be defeat. Because He is so relentless, He is content to be slow (cf. the parable of the tares). The lesson to Job is that God's

[L] Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; 15
He eateth grass as an ox.

---

apparent connivance at wrong may imply a more not a less deadly hostility to it. Besides, the execution of judgement might be postponed to give the sinner time to repent. Unhappily the language is so indefinite that we can feel no confidence as to its meaning. Here the speech of Yahweh comes to an end, and Job confesses his insignificance (verses 2, 3), and his presumption in speaking of things far beyond him, which, now that hearsay knowledge of God had been replaced by direct vision of Him, he repents in dust and ashes (xlii. 2-6).

xl. 15—xli. 34. Reasons have been given in the introduction to this section for the belief that this passage is an insertion by another hand. The identification of these two monsters given in the margin, of behemoth with the hippopotamus and leviathan with the crocodile, is that universally accepted by those who regard them as belonging to natural history, not to mythology. The latter view is very ancient, but it has been revived and defended by some modern scholars with great learning and skill. Cheyne in his *Job and Solomon* led the way, and was followed by Toy in his *Judaism and Christianity*. Independently, Gunkel devoted a much fuller discussion to the problem, identifying leviathan with the chaos-monster Tiamat, and behemoth with Kingu, her consort. He is followed by Zimmern, in the last edition of Schrader's *KAT*. It is true that in some passages this identification holds good. It is also true that certain details do not well fit the hippopotamus and the crocodile. Scholars generally have not accepted the mythological interpretation, but abide by the usual identification. The inappropriateness of some details may be readily explained by the imperfect knowledge or exaggeration of the author, while the detailed description, so close to the animals named, creates an almost irresistible impression that these were intended. The English reader should consult Cheyne's article 'Behemoth and Leviathan' in the *EBi.* for a statement and defence of the mythological interpretation. Those who can read German should see Budde's elaborate note on the other side.

**15. behemoth** has been usually regarded as a Hebraized form of *p-ehe-mou* the Egyptian term for 'water-ox.' W. M. Müller, the Egyptologist, has, however, recently affirmed that there is no philological basis for this view (*EBi.* col. 519). The word is an intensive plural of the common Hebrew word for 'beast,' and simply means a huge beast.

**which I made:** omitted by LXX and some modern scholars, but then the statement would be made that behemoth lived in Job's

16 Lo now, his strength is in his loins,
And his force is in the muscles of his belly.
17 He moveth his tail like a cedar:
The sinews of his thighs are knit together.
18 His bones are *as* tubes of brass;
His limbs are like bars of iron.
19 He is the chief of the ways of God:
He *only* that made him can make his sword to approach *unto him.*
20 Surely the mountains bring him forth food;
Where all the beasts of the field do play.

---

neighbourhood; the text is better, and means that Job and it are alike God's creatures.

**17.** The comparison of the short tail to a cedar is a remarkable exaggeration. It is the only one in the enumeration of the 'points' of the hippopotamus.

**18. limbs:** marg. 'ribs.'

**19. chief of the ways of God:** this rendering suggests that he is God's masterpiece. More probably we should render 'the beginning of the ways of God.' This does not rest on a mythical story in which this place was assigned to it, but on Gen. i. 24, where, in the enumeration of the living creatures brought forth by the earth, we have cattle (*b^e^hēmāh*) placed first. The later Jewish theology spun a great deal out of this line.

The second line is generally acknowledged to be corrupt. The R. V. translation gives a poor sense awkwardly expressed. The marg., 'He that made him hath furnished *him with* his sword,' gives a sense which seems satisfactory, the sword being the tusks, with which he cuts his food. This forms a good preparation for verse 20. But the Hebrew for 'He that made him' is strange, and the interpretation of 'sword' rather forced. Ley reads 'his prey' (*tarpō*) for 'his sword.' This leaves the first difficulty where it was, and while it leads on to verse 20, the question is whether we ought not rather to secure a parallel to the first line. Giesebrecht has probably suggested the right solution. The precise restoration may remain uncertain, the sense was apparently that behemoth was made to be ruler of his fellows.

**20.** For **mountains** some read 'rivers,' we might then translate with Wright 'For the river growth provides for him.' But the hippopotamus pastures when necessary on higher lands. In Ps. l. 10 we read of the 'cattle (*b^e^hemōth*) on a thousand hills';

He lieth under the lotus trees, 21
In the covert of the reed, and the fen.
The lotus trees cover him with their shadow; 22
The willows of the brook compass him about.
Behold, if a river overflow, he trembleth not: 23
He is confident, though Jordan swell even to his mouth.
Shall any take him when he is on the watch, 24
Or pierce through his nose with a snare?

---

Rabbinical exegesis deduced that behemoth depastured a thousand hills. The second line gives an excellent sense, to which it is hypercritical to object. The mighty behemoth lives on grass, hence the other animals may sport in his presence without fear. We could, however, with Duhm divide a little differently, and read 'All the beasts of the field he crushes. And there he lieth, &c.'

**22.** Bickell omits as mere repetition of verse 21. Duhm thinks the lotus-trees could not have been mentioned again; but the present text is approved by a rather pretty double assonance. Verse 21 could better be spared, or, if emendation is necessary to keep both, the verses could be transposed and verse 21 emended. But no alteration is needed.

**23 overflow:** marg. 'be violent.' He is quite indifferent to the wildest fury of the torrent.

**Jordan.** The hippopotamus is not found in the Jordan, we must therefore translate 'a Jordan,' the term illustrating the rushing flood, named in the preceding line. Ley and Budde strike out the word. The relative size of Jordan and Nile is no real argument for this, were that in view the reference to the Nile as a Jordan would, of course, be depreciatory; the point, however, is the violence and speed of the stream.

**24. when he is on the watch** is literally 'in his eyes.' The R. V. may give the correct sense. Still, the parallelism of 'eyes' and 'nose' suggests that both are mentioned as objects of attack. Ley thinks the reference is to the ease with which the animal is captured by blinding its eyes. But the contrast between the colossal size and the ease of capture, which he discovers, is pretty certainly not here. There is no intention to make behemoth ridiculous, a milk and water monster; he is a companion, not a foil, to leviathan. We should insert 'Who' at the beginning of the verse (*mī hu'* has fallen out after *pīhū*). The meaning of the verse is, who will be so bold as to attack behemoth in the eyes or pierce his nose with a snare? The emendation of 'teeth' for 'eyes,' 'who will take him by his teeth?' is unnecessary. The Egyptians used to

**41** Canst thou draw out leviathan with a fish hook?
Or press down his tongue with a cord?
2 Canst thou put a rope into his nose?
Or pierce his jaw through with a hook?
3 Will he make many supplications unto thee?
Or will he speak soft words unto thee?
4 Will he make a covenant with thee,
That thou shouldest take him for a servant for ever?
5 Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?
Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?
6 Shall the bands *of fishermen* make traffic of him?
Shall they part him among the merchants?

---

hunt the hippopotamus and harpoon it, but this is no reason for refusing to identify behemoth with it. The LXX omits the verse, and it is not unlike xli. 2, still we need not omit it.

Duhm places xli. 9–12 after this verse as the conclusion of the section on behemoth. See note on xli. 9.

xli. **1.** The division of chapters is much better in the English than in the Hebrew Bible, in which ch. xli. 1 coincides with xli. 9 of the English.

The author regards the crocodile as defying capture, though, as a matter of fact, the Egyptians were able to take it. The whole description is dominated by this thought. The meaning of the second line is not clear. The crocodile was mistakenly thought by many ancient writers to have no tongue, but the line hardly means 'you cannot press down his tongue, for he has none,' but rather you cannot press down his tongue, for he is too formidable to be attacked. The pressing down of the tongue is taken by many to refer to the pressure on it by the rope to which the hook was attached. But more probably the line refers to a second stage, when you have caught him, can you put a rope round his tongue and lower jaw to lead him about.

**2. rope:** Heb. 'rope of rushes.' For **hook** the marg. 'spike' would be better. He cannot be treated as others are, but the reference here again is not clear, whether to the custom of stringing fish on a cord to keep them fresh in the water or take them to market, or whether to the leading of wild animals about with rope and hook.

**6.** Will the guilds of fishermen chaffer over him with the merchants?

Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons, 7
Or his head with fish spears?
Lay thine hand upon him; 8
Remember the battle, and do so no more.
Behold, the hope of him is in vain: 9
Shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?
None is so fierce that he dare stir him up: 10
Who then is he that can stand before me?
Who hath first given unto me, that I should repay him? 11
*Whatsoever is* under the whole heaven is mine.

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**7.** Harpoons were used by the ancients, and sometimes had a reel attached to them. The armour of the crocodile seems to the author impregnable to such attacks. Harpoons would glance harmlessly off its scales.

**8.** Dare to lay your hand on him, you will not have the chance of doing it a second time, so remember beforehand the fatal issue a battle with him would involve.

**9.** Merx, Bickell, and Cheyne place verses 9-12 before xxxviii. 1, correcting the text considerably and turning it into a soliloquy of God, on which the address to Job follows. The verses do not seem quite at home in their present position. If they are to be removed, however, they would form a very suitable conclusion to the description of behemoth, placed in that case, as by Duhm, after xl. 24. At present that description breaks off rather abruptly. Duhm alters the text so that there is no reference to the greatness of God, while verse 12 gets a wholly different sense. Ley agrees with reference to verses 9-11, but leaves the verses in their present connexion.

**hope of him:** i. e. the hope such a one who attacked the monster might have of subduing him. If the verses are in their true connexion, it would be simpler to read 'thy hope' and 'shalt not thou,' or better 'thou shalt be.'

**10.** Some MSS. and the marg. read 'him' for **me**, 'And who can stand before him?'

**11.** The verse in its present form is very loosely attached to the context. With a trifling alteration the LXX, followed by several scholars, reads 'Who has assailed me and been safe?' which gives a fair sense, but does not suit the second line very well, though Duhm's emendation, 'Under the whole heaven not one,' would suit the LXX reading as well as his version of the first line, 'Who has assailed him and been safe?'

12 I will not keep silence concerning his limbs,
Nor his mighty strength, nor his comely proportion.
13 Who can strip off his outer garment?
Who shall come within his double bridle?
14 Who can open the doors of his face?
Round about his teeth is terror.
15 *His* strong scales are *his* pride,
Shut up together *as with* a close seal.
16 One is so near to another,
That no air can come between them.
17 They are joined one to another;
They stick together, that they cannot be sundered.
18 His neesings flash forth light,
And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.

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**12.** The text is suspicious on account of its unsuitability in a speech of God, and the doubt is confirmed by the fact that the word translated **comely** occurs nowhere else. Duhm with very slight change reads 'He would not renew his boastings, and the talk of valiant deeds and his rich outfit.' The hippopotamus would stop the hunter's swaggering stories of his exploits. The word translated 'parts' might just as well mean 'boastings,' and 'the talk of' is expressed in the Hebrew, but omitted in English. Budde leaves part of the text untranslated.

**13.** Literally 'Who can uncover the face of his garment,' the face being the inner surface of the scales, next to the flesh.

**double bridle** is taken to mean his jaws, but the LXX reads his double breastplate (*siryōnō* for *risnō*).

**14. doors of his face:** i. e. his mouth. The margin for the second line 'His teeth are terrible round about' (so A. V.) is not so good as the text.

**15. strong scales:** marg. 'courses of scales,' Heb. 'channels of shields.' For **pride** we should, following several versions, read 'back.' 'Channels of shields form his back.' The reference is to the rows of shield-shaped scales.

**18. neesings:** i. e. sneezings. The spray breathed through his nostrils flashes in the sunlight.

**eyelids of the morning:** cf. iii. 9. The eyes of the crocodile are visible some distance under water. The Egyptians expressed the dawn in the hieroglyphs by the crocodile's eyes.

Out of his mouth go burning torches, 19
And sparks of fire leap forth.
Out of his nostrils a smoke goeth, 20
As of a seething pot and *burning* rushes.
His breath kindleth coals, 21
And a flame goeth forth from his mouth.
In his neck abideth strength, 22
And terror danceth before him.
The flakes of his flesh are joined together: 23
They are firm upon him; they cannot be moved.
His heart is as firm as a stone; 24
Yea, firm as the nether millstone.
When he raiseth himself up, the mighty are afraid: 25
By reason of consternation they are beside themselves.
If one lay at him with the sword, it cannot avail; 26
Nor the spear, the dart, nor the pointed shaft.
He counteth iron as straw, 27
*And* brass as rotten wood.
The arrow cannot make him flee: 28

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**19–21.** A very hyperbolical description of the monster's steaming breath. But the author may have embroidered his picture with reminiscences of stories of fire-breathing dragons.

**22.** Terror goes with him wherever he goes.

**23, 24.** The triple repetition of **firm** is probably due to a textual error.

The underparts, unlike those of other animals, do not hang down flabbily, but are firm and tightly joined together. The lower millstone was proverbially hard, since it had to bear all the grinding pressure of its 'rider.'

**25. By reason of consternation.** The A. V. translated 'By reason of breakings.' The text is by many supposed to be at fault. Budde reads 'the breakers of the sea,' Duhm 'the watchers,' Giesebrecht 'at his teeth the mighty are beside themselves.'

**26. pointed shaft,** marg. 'coat of mail,' is unsuitable to the context.

**28. arrow:** *lit.* 'son of the bow.'

Slingstones are turned with him into stubble.
29 Clubs are counted as stubble:
He laugheth at the rushing of the javelin.
30 His underparts are *like* sharp potsherds:
He spreadeth *as it were* a threshing wain upon the mire.
31 He maketh the deep to boil like a pot:
He maketh the sea like ointment.
32 He maketh a path to shine after him;
One would think the deep to be hoary.
33 Upon earth there is not his like,
That is made without fear.
34 He beholdeth every thing that is high:

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**30.** The scales on the underpart of the body are compared to sharp potsherds, so that as he moves across the mire he makes a mark as if a threshing sledge, studded on the under side with teeth, had passed over it. Duhm objects to this that the scales on the underpart are smooth. Dillmann says they are smaller than those on the back, but equally sharp. Davidson says that though smoother than those on the back, they are still sharp. If modern commentators can differ like this on a plain matter of fact, one cannot expect too great precision in a poet, who may have known the crocodile only from reports or reading. Besides, Duhm's emendations are too radical.

**31.** He churns the sea into froth, the mad turmoil and scum on the surface being suggested by the boiling pot, while the foam, and, as some think, the musky odour, are compared to that made by the perfumer as he whips together the ingredients of an ointment.

**32.** Several scholars alter the verse in one way or another, but while trifling changes may be desirable, the general sense ought to remain unaffected. As he rushes through the sea, the course he has taken is shown by the shining furrow behind him, and the white foam that spreads over the surface gives the sea a hoary appearance.

**33. his like:** some prefer to translate 'his ruler,' but the text is better.

**34.** The first line gives a poor sense, far better with most recent scholars 'Everything that is high feareth him,' which gives

He is king over all the sons of pride.

[**M**] Then Job answered the LORD, and said, **42**
[**A**] I know that thou canst do all things, 2
And that no purpose of thine can be restrained.
Who is this that hideth counsel without knowledge? 3
Therefore have I uttered that which I understood not,
Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.
[**M**] Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak; 4
I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
[**A**] I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; 5

---

a better parallel to the next line, and an excellent contrast to 'without fear.'

**sons of pride:** i. e. the proud beasts of prey, see xxviii. 8.

xlii. The beginning of Job's speech has been misplaced, and is now found in xl. 3–5.

**3.** The first line is quoted from xxxviii. 2. That Job should drop into soliloquy and repeat Yahweh's words may seem to some a subtle beauty, the present writer can see in it nothing but an artificiality. Rather we must regard this line and the similar quotation in verse $4^b$ as originally written on the margin by a reader, as very appropriate reminders of what God had said, unless with Klostermann we can save this line by reading ''Tis I that hide counsel without knowledge' (*'ănī* for *mī*). The suggestion that the words are here spoken by Yahweh, twice breaking in on Job's speech, seems to the present writer quite unacceptable, especially in the case of $3^a$. Job's penitent confession would have met with a very ungracious and inappropriate response.

**4.** Not a request by Job for fuller teaching, for God has spoken and Job acquiesces in his ignorance. The second line is a quotation from xxxviii. 3, written on the margin (see note on verse 3), and out of it, by the addition of a parallel line, a couplet has been made. The whole verse is an insertion.

**5.** The supreme lesson of the book. His previous knowledge of God was that given by the traditional theology, in which he had been trained. It left no room for the suffering of the righteous; if the righteous suffered, then the theology was false. Such an inference Job had felt forced to draw. But now he has seen God, and all is changed. He knows that God is righteous, he knows that, though he suffers, he is righteous also. How these apparent contradictories can be intellectually reconciled he

But now mine eye seeth thee,
6 Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent
In dust and ashes.

7 And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two

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does not know. But he and God are again at one, a deeper fellowship is possible, untroubled by misgivings as to God's moral integrity. Happy, even in his pain, that he has found himself and his God, he would rather suffer, if God willed it, than be in health and prosperity. He knows that all is well, he and his sufferings have their place in God's inscrutable design; why should he seek to understand it? in childlike reverence he acknowledges it to be far beyond him. This mystical solution is the most precious thing the book has to offer us. On the meaning of this and of the speeches of Yahweh see further in the Introduction.

**6. abhor** *myself*: marg. is probably better, 'loathe *my words.*' The verb has no object in Hebrew.

xlii. 7–9. When Yahweh had spoken to Job, He censures the friends for not speaking right of Him as Job had done. They are bidden sacrifice, and on Job's intercession are spared the punishment they had deserved.

xlii. 10–17. Job is restored to prosperity, and his possessions are doubled. His relatives and friends visit him and make him presents. He has seven sons and three daughters, the fairest women in the land, and inheriting with their brothers. He dies in a good old age, seeing his descendants to the fourth generation.

**7.** The view that the prose portions of the book were borrowed from an older saga finds here one of its strongest supports. Yahweh's harsh judgement seems to correspond ill with the pious tone in which the friends speak. They had sincerely wished to uphold the honour of God, and that they had made mistakes was a pardonable offence. Moreover Job, so far from winning the approval of Yahweh in the speech out of the storm, was declared by Him to have darkened counsel by words without knowledge. We could understand the verse much better, if originally the friends had been represented as speaking in the tone of Job's wife, and Job himself as speaking in the tone of i. 21, ii. 10. But while the expressions are not well suited to the debate as we now have it, the poet did not scruple to retain them, and even to put

friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is
right, as my servant Job hath. Now therefore, take unto 8
you seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant
Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my
servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept, that
I deal not with you after your folly; for ye have not spoken
of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.
So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and 9
Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the
LORD commanded them: and the LORD accepted Job.
And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed 10
for his friends: and the LORD gave Job twice as much
as he had before. Then came there unto him all his 11
brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been
of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in
his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him
concerning all the evil that the LORD had brought upon

---

a prediction of them in Job's mouth (xiii. 7–11). For their general sense, that Job was more in harmony with the truth of things than the servile special pleaders for God, was his own verdict, though he would not have spoken of either quite in this way. And he has been justified by the interpretation placed on the words by his commentators. He was in a measure fettered by the tradition.

**3.** A large atoning offering, supplemented by Job's prayers, presupposes a great transgression. The burnt-offering as in i. 5. It is noteworthy that while the story represents Job as successfully interceding for the friends, Ezekiel says that Noah, Daniel, [? Enoch], and Job could deliver themselves only by their righteousness. It is also remarkable that Eliphaz had unconsciously predicted this in xxii. 30.

**10. turned the captivity:** better 'reversed the fortune.' The expression might conceivably be chosen with reference to Israel's fortunes, but in any case Job and Israel are not to be identified.

**twice as much:** cf. Isa. lxi. 7; Zech. ix. 12.

**11. piece of money:** Heb. 'kesitah,' Gen. xxxiii. 19; Joshua xxiv. 32. The narrator is faithful to the conditions of the patriarchal age. The money was apparently uncoined. The presents

him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and
12 every one a ring of gold. So the LORD blessed the latter
end of Job more than his beginning: and he had fourteen
thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand
13 yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. He had also
14 seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name
of the first, Jemimah; and the name of the second,
Keziah; and the name of the third, Keren-happuch.
15 And in all the land were no women found so fair as the
daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance
16 among their brethren. And after this Job lived an

---

were simply tokens of congratulation, not designed to enrich him, their value was too trifling.

**13.** While his possessions are doubled, it is a fine trait that the number of the children is the same as before. For us no child lost can be replaced, the feeling of antiquity differed to some extent from ours. It would be a mistake to suppose that the narrator meant that in the next life the children he had lost would be restored to him, and thus the children would be doubled to him then as his possessions were now. Such a hope was unknown to him.

**14. Jemimah:** perhaps 'dove.' **Keziah** is cassia. **Keren-happuch** is generally taken to mean 'horn' (or 'box') 'of eye-paint.' This was used to make the eye look brighter (2 Kings ix. 30; Jer. iv. 30). Cheyne formerly explained 'one who sets off the company in which she is, as antimony does the eye' ('Jeremiah' in *Pulpit Commentary*, p. 82). Now he thinks the name very improbable, and suggests 'scent of apples,' a much prettier name, to our taste at any rate. For Jemimah he reads Temimah 'spotless.'

**15.** The Jewish law allowed daughters to inherit when there was no son (Num. xxvii. 1-11). Job gives his daughters an inheritance with the sons, so that the family may remain united, as the former family is represented to have been, i. 4. That, so fair and so rich, they married goes without saying.

**16. hundred and forty:** twice seventy, it is not unlikely that the story represented Job as receiving after his trial double the number of years as before it, if so he was seventy when his trial overtook him. The LXX reads a hundred and seventy instead of a hundred and forty, and makes the total length of his life two hundred and forty years. That makes him seventy at the time of his trial.

hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, *even* four generations. So Job died, being old and 17 full of days.

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**17.** The LXX adds 'and it is written that he will rise again with those whom the Lord raises up.' After this follows a series of statements on Job's genealogy and related matters; they are taken from some Aramaic writing and have no value of any kind. The reference to the resurrection is interesting, partly as an indication that at the time when it was added a resurrection of the eminently righteous was expected, but still more as an evidence for the early interpretation of xix. 25-27 as a reference to the resurrection.

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